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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by AUSTIN HARRISON

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OCTOBER 1921

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THE

ENGLISH REVIEW

OCTOBER, 1921.

Wonderchild

A Poem in 3 Parts

By F. V. Branford

NOTE.—Part I. of the following poem represents certain negative situations in the spiritual, or creative, life of Man, whence arises (Part II.) a new idealizing vitality qualified to overcome the forces of negation and so reassume, in a measure, the control of destiny. Under symbolism, mainly adapted from alchemistic writings (Part III.), is portrayed the power and privilege of Man when he has thus attained to the freedom of the City of God.

PART I.

THE WORD DESCENDS.

(*Chorus: Spirits of Earth and the Heavens and elemental spirits.*)

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

ART thou lorn of polar spaces,
Hermit, in thine airy cell,
Servile, in thy burning traces
We gleaned no glad song where it fell?

SPIRITS OF EARTH.

Singing-times are all foregone;
Breath and Beauty fail together,
Over field and fold are grown
Wild weeds and heather.

Guardians of the Glistering Gate
Of Sun and Song rise, have ye heard
From the stellar smiths of fate
Rumour there of the coming Word?

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

From the Flaming Hand a white
  Unmortal Word rays forth; it saith,
"Speak" to the dumbness of the night,
  "Shine" to the darkness of death.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

As a gold eagle, with doom on his wing,
  Poised for the plunge, from my platform of grace
On the hand of the Forger of Language, I spring
  At the throat of the darkness, through chasms of space.

Beleaguer my ramparts, built on the Lord,
  From your battlements based on the beds of the sea.
  Blow! Blow out your lives, for your bugles shall be
Hewn from your lips in the wheel of the Word.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

He plunges from the Flaming Hand,
  Steel-steady, storm-strong,
Through hollow void to hard Fiendland,
Where the ancient Guile has planned
  Him elemental wrong.

SPIRITS OF EARTH.

Bare and bruised and bound I stand,
  Every hour is æon long,
To wait the Word that wields the wand
That shall untouch mine iron band
  With Sanctity and Song.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

Not mildew blast, nor damp Lethean bowl
  Brewed to the brim with mortal aconite,
Unthreads the prisoned sinews of the soul
  To rape that feeble fortalice, with might
Of direr moment, than the baleful spell
Cast up the void through vaulted vents of Hell
Whereby of old the encumbered angels fell.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Deep and far he now must fare
To lore of weal in woeful manner,
Across the Bridge of Birth to bear
Into time the eternal banner.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

Lean echoes from the trumpet tongues of Dawn
Convulse and perish in my poisoned ear.
My sight is shrivelled, the Heavens dwarfed and drawn
Wrily, great globes of crystal, that insphere
Bright gods, misted in mirthless music . . . . One breath
O, sea-wind blown across the Elysian heath . . .

I doubt. I fear. I fall a wingless weight
Through Night of Naught to what uncertain fate.

SPIRITS OF THE EARTH.

Alas! the Word is foully flung
By the wrestling music sung
Out of Hell's vast rotting lung.
Sun and Moon are going out
And the stars reel back in rout
Before the dragons, Darkness and Doubt.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

Drugged on vialed evil, damned I fall
Downright through tiers of void and headlong sheer
Through shrunken circles, whose depending pall
Outdarks Cimmerian Night; and now that Mere
Of spectral substance gropes with formless hand
Across the uncreated country, where,
Entrenched on solid gloom, the Anarch band,
Captained by Chaos, congregate to bear
Down Heaven and Earth and Hell, in trinal host,
Before the blank ensign of that tremendous Ghost.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Where Void is Chaos-cloven
By the hoof of horned Night,
Is the poet proven
In the poet's slight;
Must his mail be woven
With a god's whole might.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

Through catacombs of agony I roam
Having a hundred houses and no home.

SPIRITS OF EARTH.

O cloud-compelling God,
Obedient to Thy nod,
His fainting footsteps fail along
The street of agony to song.
Lift the Great Voice, Mysterious,
He, in a darkened house
Dumbly distraught,—
In himself is naught,
Lift the Great Voice and be
Thou he.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Yourselves, ye must dower him
Spirits of Earth,
Yourselves must empower him
Through dooms before birth,
Or demons devour him
In darkness and dearth.

SPIRITS OF EARTH.

Who flings his burning gage
Of battle, in this frozen age
To that dire demon whose
Hair, bound with bloody thews,
Breeds vipers, plague, and death
Laired in his breath
His mouth one spilth
Of froth and filth,
The abode
Of a toad?

SPIRIT OF THE SUN.

I will stand, in a might
Of massive light,
Between the Word and the Powers of Night.

SPIRIT OF SNOW.

I, in my purity,
Shall be his surety.

SPIRIT OF AIR.

To his ankles I will bind
Strength of Storm and wing of Wind.

SPIRIT OF BEAUTY.

I will make
His thirst to slake
Wine of my blood, and my body break
For bread, that he
May eat and be
Wiled in the deeps of Poetry.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

By near-eyed Doubt, through spaceless lands, convoyed
Beyond the bourne of time, I fare while worlds
On glistering worlds roll numberless to naught,
Down to a desolate and visionless Vast
By Terrors grimly tenanted. Here ramps,
On iron shingle bronzed by bitter waters,
The gaping Skeleton that walks in Man
To sanction one brief hour the brilliant lie
O' the flesh, till Beauty burn to the bleached bone
Of every loveliness.

Throned on an ebon cloud, in hurricane
Advanced, rides Death aloft. His bulk baulks day.
His eyes are two dark suns that blaze a black light.
About his head spin storm-fires. His left hand
Wreathes in the mane of thunder. His right holds doom
Pendant in Zenith over the aidless gods.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

The Word is silent; now he flows
Through worlds unutterable of woes.
Sing we Poetry and Pain
Till the Word flow forth again.

SPIRITS OF EARTH AND THE HEAVENS.

Now that moveless wind, that placid powerful will
  Peace hearted in tumult, centre of motioning,
Sorrow, sleepless soul of slumber, standeth still
  Erect in starless spaces, Earth's iron-sceptred king.

Wan the witch of Heaven, while her bright shoon fleet
  Down the golden precipice of cloud hill-sides,
Peers coyly round coquetting, cruelly to cheat
  With far and flying laughter fascinated tides.

Mocking Queen of Poetry! She smiles not ever now
  On spare and antique Pain, but flies love before
Years fall splintered round him, yet he holds his vow
  Enfeoffed to tongueless vigil on a desolate shore.

Mountains solve to spectres, quelled by faint moon-wands,
  As Grief's frailer finger stroke smites mass afar.
What huntsman holds the trail through the Nevernoon lands
  Shall unwind the spell of stone and wield the gloze of star.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

Here, in the middle void, hangs the firm heart
Of Hell, compacted Night, more deep below
The positive pitch of dark than is transcended
Dawn by Heaven's most brilliant chamber, blazed
With burnished visions panoplied in the light
Of great Ideals; which the Parodist
Contorts to Idols in mock splendour, and here
Implaces;—archetypes whence images
Forged on ancestral anvils, by black art
For man's destruction, drew their fatal fires.

No cloud-enrondured Titan, gloom-capped god,
Imp, urchin, gnome, hunched hobbler over Earth
Did elemental Wrong design, but first
His unacquainted hand learned here its trade.
Here storms impetuous Bel; here Asshur raves
Stithied for slaughter down the Tigris bank;

Here fumes the wrath of Mars, throated in iron,
And like the statue of a mountain stands
The Thunderer erect, with hammer high
To strike the stars from anchor and teach Earth
To yawn in shattered chasms under blows.

Each in his hour trampled the world in triumph
Nor died; but, burning in the lustful breath
That animates their modern counterpart,
All find one avatar; in semblance new
But inly moulded to the antique type.
A hideous serpent spawns in the dark, and sums
In single brood their several elements.
Bias of Sex stinks from his festered maw,
Through slime and offal crawls the crooked shape
Of Colour Prejudice, Imperial Lust
Sticks out his forkèd tongue to feed on filth;
Grandly he rolls—one black, round, bloated belly—
Through attent throngs of small half-witted snakes—
(In company called "Patriots" by their peers)—
Demons of contention, that enhavoc
Nations, in whose flat, fanged, hissing heads
Writhes the red world disrupt and man destroyed.

Against these dark Dominions the great doom
Of song pours down the æons. Rank on rank,
Through futile fields to fertile victories,
In truceless war the white battalions press;
I least and latest marching, am yet mailed
Greatly, and weaponed from a forge whose might
Passes the hand of Vulcan, for I wield
Engines invincible dreamed in the brain of God.
Loud is my lyre, and great in labour grown
With strains, committed to its nervous charge,
Of harmony and fruitful toil between
Nature and Man, the Mortal Deities;
Unconquerable Antagonists, that bleed
Blindly in barren battle to no end.
Bearing the banner of the common fate
And Common-weal o' the world, I hold at bay
Night and the horded rabble of her priests,

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Forward the Word in silence, cóntempted
By glossy Satisfaction and Conceit
Obscurely flows; but from the brink of Hell
Wheels, like a falcon balanced on his prey,
In flaming spirals round night's sable rim.

Now in the forthright stature of God and Man
He reareth on the void erect and down,
More rash than bolted nitre driven from Mars
To rive up desolate human shores, he hurls
His heavy hate in thunder through the pit.

Time boasts the instant to Eternity.
Wracked with divisive jars that wild world rocks,
Convulsed and palsied through its narrow nerves
From pointless apex down to footless base,
In prayerless passion loud along the Inane.

Tumultuous splendour of enchanted light
Through dawn-loud trumpets tempested, display
Darkness and Death—lamps swung at Heaven's foot.

Now square anew the astonied Lords of Gloom
Their riven cohorts, as the glory wanes.
But straight, on shafted thought uplift, the Word
Trailing a wake of music Earthward soars.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

Lords of the Lyre, now not my lips
  Only, but each bruised cell
Wherein the broken spirit clips
  Calvary, shall praise You well.

O Storm of Life, I am a string
  Taut before Your furious foot;
Tread me down, for pained I sing,
  Who, spared and spurned, am mute.

Tread me down, for pained I sing,
  And singing gather strength anew,
Till from below Your foot I spring
  To match my sudden might with You.

And thus addressed to heavenly strife
The field is all my own;
O Storm of Song, O Lords of Life,
My foot shall tread You down.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Who returneth whence he came,
Through Night of Nothing to Thy heart
By the Bridge of Sin and Shame,
He shall know Thee, who Thou art.

Who hath died so deep in life
That Death disdain him for his dart,
Shall turn in fierce and loving strife
On Thee, and know Thee who Thou art.

Who shall prevail, in awful grace
Of love, o'er Thee, shall surely run
With fire and wind before Thy face;
He is thy Beloved Son.

Who this secret shall acclaim,
He the many, Thou the One,
Through doubt, and fear and sin, and shame,
He is Thy Beloved Son.

Part II.

THE WORD ASCENDS

A SPIRIT OF THE HEAVENS.

In the starry forge of fate
Love is beaten out of hate,
Gladness from the ore of gloom
And salvation out of doom;
When all substances are rolled
To their single secret gold
On the White Eternal Stone
That welds the multiverse to One.

A SPIRIT OF EARTH.

Fighting, Man is stable terror,
Rhythmed silence is man talking,
Thinking, Man is law of error,
Balanced fall Man walking.

For the man who feareth well
Feareth neither Heaven nor Hell,
While he who can be greatly dumb
Calls to mountains and they come.

None holdeth Truth so hard as he
Who holds himself a fallacy.
And he who knoweth how to fall
Will never tumble down at all.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Thus by Pain are poets taught
How to make something out of naught.
As he who fell so far in night
Fell fire, and is, ascending, light.

Let all front East where fire and light belong
And hail the rising gods of sun and song.

SPIRITS OF EARTH.

Lo! the black-winged Lord of Song
Storms in blasts of light along
The hither shore of gloomy Dis
Whose dark glamour drowns in His.

Now, on the failing verge of night,
Confronting Heaven, a mass of might,
He strides, with tempest-taken breath
Thundering loaded life at Death.

Less far than faint, as dreams of dreams,
Gyre on gyre, the wing-lit streams
Of sea-birds whorl in dense voluted
Columns from their foam ensuited

Chamber in the water-looted
Mountain base, and dull the air
To dusk with bright bird thoroughfare.
Round the treacherous craglines trail
Tremulous vague vestures, pale
Mist-Maidens, while quick Dawn unhoods
Darkness from the flaming woods,
That, leaning to the lake, admire
Their image in a glass of fire,
Rimmed around with beaten snows
Where Frost with brilliant graver flows
Till the plated valleys shine
Like feasting flagons flashed with wine.

The tables of the world are spread.
That minstrel shall be banqueted
Who sings the song of songs whereon
Man shall re-build the Parthenon.

VOICE OF THE WORD.

I come a bidden guest
Who died in the West
Where famine, plague, and earthquake are;
And I wear on my breast
Hell's fire, caught and pressed
In the frame of my heart to the form of a star.

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Drink, gods of Mirth,
To the triumph of Earth,
For the slayer of demons comes smiting to slay,
Drain the bright flagon
Dawn, for the dragon
Darkness dies at the heel of the Day.

SPIRITS OF EARTH.

Halt Winter. Haste Spring,
From your swift shoulder fling
Its dreaming suit of snow
And ride, and ride, and ride,

With Sun and Song on either side.
Ride till the round earth rock and reel
Chained to the speed of your chariot wheel.
Braced
To battle,
Paced
With pain,
Under the rattle
And rasp of your rein,
Let the drunken, grand insane
Wind-shod horses go.

Part III.

THE WORD MADE FLESH

SPIRITS OF THE HEAVENS.

Coiled in the dark womb he lies
Slumbering while his spirit buys
At great price great verities.
Over his cradle shall no choir
Of holy poets sing; his dire
Lullaby shall cannon fire.
Chant him Time and chant him Space
In his hour of doom and grace.
Chant him Space and chant him Time
Earthward on aerial rhyme.

SPACE: Across the armoured lands
TIME: Upon the frozen years
SPACE: I stretch my naked hands
TIME: I drop my burning tears
SPACE and TIME: Wonderchild, awake! awake!
EARTH: Nay, rouse him not,
SPACE and TIME: He must forsake
Thee, Earth, to-day, if but to borrow
Flame to scarf thy brow to-morrow.
SPACE: Wonderchild, awake! awake!
TIME: All a shining world's at stake.
SPACE: When he chains his linked thought
Round my shoulders

TIME: Thou art naught.
SPACE: As thou, whose wing is scotched beneath
The wheel of fire that rides his breath.
TIME: Hail him! Hail him! Heir of Wonder,
Son of Song
SPACE: and Sire of Thunder!
TIME: Hail him! Hail him! With Orion
He shall harry the Green Lion
Through the forests of the stars.
SPACE: Forth to worlds of rolling wars
Divinely drunken
TIME: God-delirious
He shall grandly ride with Sirius.
SPACE: Hail him! Hail him! He shall be a
TIME: Soldier under Cassiopeia.
SPACE: He at either hip shall wear
Blades
TIME: and both Excalibur.
SPACE: He shall bear in a cleft wand
TIME: A round red moon with his left hand.
SPACE: With his right hand he shall hold
TIME: The throats of storm and heat and cold.
SPACE: Wonderchild, awake! awake!
TIME: Toil and Tears are thine to take.
SPACE: Earth is an enchanted town,
TIME: Toil and Tears and a king's crown.
SPACE: Waiting on a wizard's word.
TIME: Toil and Tears and a king's sword.
SPACE: Wonderchild, awake! awake!
TIME: Toil and Tears for thy dear Lord's sake.
SPACE: Wake to worlds of rolling wars.
TIME: Toil and Tears in Athanors.

Revolution in Art

By T. C. Gotch, R.I., V.P.R.W.A.,

President of the Royal British Colonial Society of Artists.

AMID the welter of uncertainties in which we live, it is difficult to lay down a hard-and-fast rule, or to find an immutable law, by which to guide the worker or to test his work. This is particularly true of Art, which, though dependent for its expression on the intellect, is, in its essence, born of emotion, and, if it survive and become a lasting force, does so by virtue of the emotion it is able to excite and sustain in others.

Physical law (the law of gravitation, for instance), whether we can give an account of it or no, we are bound to obey, or we perish. So, too, we must believe with regard to spiritual law. Those who excel in spiritual achievement do so in obedience to spiritual law, whether they, too, can give an account of it or no. If we wish to understand the present revolution in Art, and make a forecast, we must seek some knowledge of the laws which govern emotion. The writer does not venture to hope that he can do more than throw a little light on the subject, and make some suggestions that may bear fruit in the minds of others.

The present revolutionary phase in art has been led up to through a series of movements known as "impressionism," "post-impressionism," "vorticism," "cubism," "futurism," and other "isms." They are all protests against what, for want of a precise definition, one may describe as the academic art of the day; the main stream, that is to say, which, whether good or bad, successful or unsuccessful, permanent or ephemeral, has its origin in the general European art of the past. If any of those who have practised any of these "isms" have produced work of permanent value, it will probably be found to have certain qualities which characterise the best work of the main European stream.

A work of any permanent beauty or character needs two qualities in the artist; the first, a creative, the second, a critical power. The first is far the more important; the critical faculty alone never produced a work of art. A third condition must be fulfilled if the work is to be of "permanent" beauty or character; it must evoke a response in other minds; a public, however small, is an essential in the life of a work of art.

A protest, as such, is essentially a criticism, and unless it is accompanied by a creative impulse it will achieve no masterpiece; nothing but a stirring up of the grounds of our beliefs, a reconsideration, perhaps, of the purposes and methods of the normal stream of art.

The aims of the various revolutionary cults are so puzzling, the resultant pictures are so bewildering, that it is difficult to believe they have as yet any constructive value.

"There is no more beauty except in strife. No masterpiece without aggressiveness. Poetry must be a violent onslaught upon the unknown forces, to command them to bow before man." "We wish to glorify War—the only health-giver of the world—militarism, patriotism, the destructive arm of the Anarchist, the beautiful Ideas that kill, the contempt for woman." "We wish to destroy the museums, the libraries, to fight against moralism, feminism and all opportunistic and utilitarian meannesses." Such are some of the more lucid passages in the *Initial Manifesto of Futurism*, issued by F. T. Marinetti, in 1909. Fortunately, we are told in the same manifesto: "The oldest amongst us is thirty; we have, therefore, ten years at least to accomplish our task. When we are forty, let others, younger and more valiant, throw us into the basket like useless manuscripts!"

He goes on to describe the fate of forty-year-old futurists at the hands of the new futurists. These "younger and more valiant," who are able to "scratch the air," "will surge around us, breathless with anxiety and disappointment, and all, exasperated by our dauntless courage, will throw themselves upon us to slay us, with all the more hatred because their hearts will be filled with love and admiration for us. And Injustice, strong and healthy, will burst forth radiantly in their eyes. For art can be nought but violence, cruelty, and injustice."

The ten years having expired, it might be hoped that Sig. Marinetti had been superseded. But being a poet, we must not take him too literally. Accordingly, being interested in "Vital English Art," Sig. Marinetti issues a further manifesto signed by himself and Mr. C. R. W. Nevinson, who gives as his address, "Art Rebel Centre, London." It concludes:

"5. A rich and powerful country like England ought without question to support, defend, and glorify its advance-guard of artists, no matter how advanced or how extreme, if she intends to deliver its art from inevitable death. 6. So we call upon the English public to support, defend, and glorify the genius of the great Futurist painters or pioneers and advance-forces of vital English Art"; and here follow the names of nine pioneers, one of whom is certainly of alien birth. That, however, does not very much matter. What really matters is the question, "Has the conception of art set forth in these manifestos anything in common with any known manifestation of vital and lasting art?"

Revolt is no new thing in the history of art. The late Mr. W. E. Henley described "Romanticism" as "a revolt from the dictates of a hide-bound, superannuated convention, and in that way an effort to realise new ideals, experiment with new methods, and discover and collect a set of new materials." The same may be said of "Pre-Raphaelitism," "Plein-airism," "Impressionism," and the later "isms." It may be worth while to enquire how "hide-bound, superannuated conventions" come about, and to examine the reasons for the birth, the rise, and the fall of the great periods of European Art. But first a word on the subject of fashion: the birth of a fashion, its influence, and its supersession.

The writer has for long believed that fashion and its changes—what is known as the swing of the pendulum—is due to, and can be explained by, some physiological law. He opened the question with an eminent physiologist, setting forth his case by a brief sketch of the changes in the character of European music, from Bach to the present day, and asked if the history of these changes could be explained by any physiological law. No doubt he put his case very badly, or the eminent physiologist, generally so sympa-

thetic and lucid, was not in the mood for such a question, and the writer was informed that music was largely mathematical, and was finally silenced by an allusion to the fourth dimension. But he is not entirely daunted, and still thinks there is a simple explanation which, if found, may throw light on the subject under discussion.

Let us take an elementary case first. A handsome woman of means adopts a certain style of dress, because it suits her; it is admired, imitated, and becomes a vogue amongst her set: so far she is not dissatisfied But another and wider set, without the opportunity, personality, or means of originating anything of distinction, wishing naturally to be in the swim, adopts the vogue and inevitably vulgarises it. The originator, in disdain, discards it, and adorns herself in a new style. That is not the whole truth about fashion in dress, but it is true enough for the purpose in hand.

Everybody knows something about mid-Victorian colour, succeeded by the "greenery yallery" period, in its turn superseded by the cornflower blue, the tango, and the more barbaric colours of to-day. It looks as though each period, sick of a phase which has ceased to stimulate, were born in a daring and enthusiastic revolt from the past, and having achieved a mellow prime, in its turn ceased to stimulate a jaded taste, and so produced the conditions necessary for a new revolt. The same phases mark the slang and the current phraseology of the day. Birth, maturity and decay, followed by a new birth, these are constantly occurring and recurring. Perhaps the writer should have put his question to an eminent psychologist rather than to the physiologist. But fatigue marks the end of a period, and enthusiasm in a new direction the beginning of the next.

The great periods of art in Europe show, on a larger scale, the same life-history, namely, birth, youth, maturity and decay; and on a closer study it seems inevitable that it should be so.

There are two periods, the first well defined, the second less well defined, which will be enough for our purpose. The first is the great Italian period, from Cimabue and Giotto to Raphael. The second is the second Flemish period from Rubens to the end of the seventeenth century.

The first opened, after some centuries of art mainly

traditional and ecclesiastical, with a new impulse and a new outlook; there seemed no limit to the possibilities of the new era; and art progressed, with changes indeed, modified and stimulated by new intellectual movements, but without anything in the nature of revolt or fatigue. There seemed plenty yet to do, and though the earlier and successive forms of this period were from time to time discarded as insufficient for its later possibilities the evolution progressed in an easy and delightful sequence. What brought it to a close? The genius of Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael, who, enjoying a rich inheritance, virtually exhausted the possibilities of the movement. The very wealth of achievement and technical resource paralysed the spirit and made it impossible to produce anything which could surpass or even equal what had already been done. It is true there was a vigorous aftermath in Venice, but, broadly speaking, the epoch was closed. For three centuries Italian art has lain obscured in the shadow of this glorious but finished period, and Italy has become a museum for the student, the scholar, and the connoisseur.

The second period of Flemish art dawned with Rubens, and was continued by Van Dyck, Rembrandt, Franz Hals, Terborch, Ver Meer of Delft, Hobbema, Ruysdael, and others. It dealt, as before, with religious, mythological, and historical subjects, and with portraiture; but it added to the subjects previously dealt with, incidents of daily life and landscape. Though the second Flemish period extended in Flanders little beyond the seventeenth century the point to observe is that it bequeathed, in incidents of daily life and in landscape, a comparatively unexplored field to artists of a later day; and though the art of Great Britain has dealt with the same kind of subjects as the Flemish school, with the addition of the satirical, represented by Hogarth, and the mystical, by William Blake, landscape painting has been the new contribution of the last two centuries, and is, indeed, at the bottom of most of the "isms" of to-day.

It will be seen that there is no very marked division between the second Flemish period and the British art of to-day. Increased travelling facilities, to use the hackneyed phrase, though they have not obliterated, have tended to obliterate national characteristics: even the art

of Japan has had a modifying influence on European art. Except as regards landscape there have been no large, fresh impulses of overwhelming strength: the period is marked rather by the achievements of individual artists, by efforts to revive the past, and by brilliant episodes. The stream no longer flows with resistless power from its rugged source, nor with a serene and buoyant confidence through the ample meadows, but its impulse (it would seem) nearly spent, it meanders through a network of minor channels.

Landscape painting, however, has developed increasingly, through many phases, and has reacted on other branches of art. It has oscillated from the real to the ideal, from the light of common day to the light that never was on land or sea; but, be it observed, wherever it has left something great and lasting the artist has consciously or unconsciously conformed to laws of composition which link his work to the great art of the past.

It would be impossible for landscape painting, with its call from the studio to the open air, to develop without having some effect on artists who were concerned with other branches of art. We see the influence in Millais in the transition stage of his pre-Raphaelite art, in the Fred. Walker episode, and abundantly in France in the later work of Jean François Millet, in Bastien Le Page and in Manet. The influence was unmistakable in the 'seventies and 'eighties when, largely through the example of Bastien Le Page, plein-air-ism—the study of figures in the open air—was developed almost to an academic degree. But the influence of landscape painting, with its insistence on capturing the passing effect (with its corollary, the painting, not of things themselves, but of things in relation to their surroundings), led inevitably to impressionism. To capture the fleeting effect it was necessary to work swiftly, to insist upon essentials, and to let the less essential go. There were true and potent impulses at work. But, be it observed again, wherever any great and lasting work resulted, the artist, consciously or unconsciously, conformed to laws of composition which linked his work to the great art of the past.

Unhappily (as the writer thinks) this experimental phase was pushed to an extreme; efforts were made to obtain greater and greater brilliancy, not so much of colour as of

light, and landscape art passed through a phase of spots and dots, points of primary colours placed side by side, and other devices, so that statements which should have been simple and clear became highly technical and obscure. Artists, in quick succession, vied with their immediate predecessors in some new experimental attempt, and the work was such as to be little understood except by artists, who recognised it for what it really was, namely, a series of experiments in technique. The new art, without the tradition behind it, had become as highly technical as the old. No wonder there was a revolt, and post-impressionism appeared!

For a key to the post-impressionist movement the writer is indebted to a well-known critic and writer on art. He compared the highly accomplished technical mastery of a certain painter, whom it were invidious to name, to a burst of oratory, brilliant and astonishing in its skill, but which said nothing, or said far too little to justify the means employed; the post-impressionists therefore determined to have something to say, and to say it naïvely and simply as a child. It sounds reasonable; the return to simplicity of vision and directness of expression is bound to be made from time to time.

What, then, had the post-impressionists to say, and how did they say it? "The buttercup is yellow," with variations, was the gist of their message, and they said it very crudely. "Houses have chimneys and windows," "Trees have branches and leaves," "Ducks are white." We know these things, and a good deal more about them than the post-impressionist permits himself to tell us. It was really much more interesting to be shown, as we had been shown, that under certain circumstances white ducks look blue; that was something which we might not have seen for ourselves. But to be told that "houses have chimneys and windows," and to omit all reference to weight, construction, or stability, is simply fooling us. It may be that the sum of these artless statements is designed to convey a message, as when it is explained that this portrait does not profess to be like the external appearance of the person, but represents the person's soul: that these cryptic splashes represent the spirit of a motor: that these dummies handling big guns emphasise the mechanical aspect of war. We are

tempted to say, "It may be so to you, but not to us; we see a crude and feeble attempt to represent something that we can recognise indeed, but the inner meaning of which, if any, escapes us; if it exist it is but obscured by your method. We have seen portraiture on the lines you condemn, and wish to supersede, which reveals much more than mere external appearance, while your method gives us less."

This kind of art has been before the public for years; if one has the heart to turn one's back on the finer qualities and standards of the past, it is easy enough to do; in spite of ridicule and incredulity there is a large output; and the critics have taken it seriously: Mr. A. Clutton Brock indeed, in a letter to the *Times*, says: "The first Post-Impressionist Exhibition in England was derided by most of the critics, though the public went in crowds to see it. Indeed, rightly or wrongly, it is the public that is interested in these new movements more than it has ever, within my memory, been interested in painting before; and the critics only share that general interest—some, no doubt, for bad reasons, others for good." The writer ventures to think that curiosity and amusement account for the interest on the part of the public, and that the critics have done much to keep the interest going. It must be remembered that it is the business of the art critic to notice the exhibitions he is invited to criticise; and the critics have always in mind Ruskin's fatal error in the matter of Whistler: to be sure, the verdict in Whistler's case was derisory, but the "whirligig of time" (and his art) avenged him in the end. This fact few critics dare ignore; if the critic be a journalist, his opinion must be expressed swiftly, with little or no time for reflection, and many are human enough to be moved by the restless spirit of the times, and to believe that because things are new there must be something in them and the chances are they have come to stay.

The post-impressionist phase has been crossed with futurism, and other developments, bizarre and incredible, have followed. The special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* wrote from Berlin on the 6th of September, 1920 (giving an account of the big annual Art Exhibition), that the "November" group had captured one-third of the space. In a long article he says, "The reader must not jump to the conclusion that the above remarks about

insanity refer to anything so absolutely commonplace and decorous as cubism and expressionism. It is true that fifteen years ago not one single picture of the November Group would have roused any other sentiments but amusement or blank wonder. . . The characteristic feature of this new mode of art is apparently economy of material. Instead of pigments, you use the contents of your waste-paper basket and ash-bin as your materials, and fasten them to your canvas or paper with any means of fixture or adhesion that may be lying about handy." Describing one of the pictures entitled "My self portrait," he says: "On the map" (which forms the background) "is glued half a slice of black bread about a quarter-of-an-inch in thickness. That is the face. The eyes are two large, black buttons, sewn on to the bread with white cotton; the nose, which is in profile, a rectangular strip of dark yellow soap about an inch and a half long; the teeth—the only indication of the mouth—the head ends of seventeen lucifer matches." And so on.

Meantime, based on the analogy of music, which can stir the emotions by sounds which have no relation to those which occur in daily life, an attempt has been made to stir the emotions by designs which have no resemblance to anything we see. It is true that in the hands of a master certain lines and masses of colour may be so disposed as to provoke emotions of pleasure, terror, serenity, or what not; this is no new device. It has been practised constantly, either consciously or unconsciously, by artists who use the things we are familiar with to express their meaning, but enhance their effect and emphasise their purpose by the use of lines and masses of colour which, rightly used, add force to what they have to say. It is an essential part of the art, not of representation, but of presentation. The device is akin to the music and rhythm of literature. Phrases without meaning can charm:

> "'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
> Did gyre and gimble, etc."

These are but sportive exercises. No one can for long read words devoid of meaning, however beautifully they flow; but the power to move is there. Meaning, happily wedded to music and rhythm, can put the case far more memorably

and convincingly than a dry and sterile statement of the fact. Such a union, conscious or unconscious, is a part of the art of presentation.

To sum up, the message of the newer art is one of profound discontent with things as they are. The newer art strives for a quick result that, whether it please or no, shall startle and arrest. It reflects, alas, too well the spirit of the times. Is it likely to produce anything of permanent beauty or character? Its disciples seem neither to expect nor want such a result. The young people must, above all things, be up to date, forgetting that to be up to date is to be quickly out of date. The cry, "I am new!" drowns the sober aspiration of the art of the past, "I seek beauty with character, or character with beauty."

The present position is explained, except so far as it is due to the upheaval of the times, to the general psychological storm which besets us, by the fact that the art movements, the "isms," of the last thirty years, have been concerned almost exclusively with technical questions: even those which have been the negation of technique, "revolts from the dictates of a hide-bound superannuated convention," all have been far too much concerned with technique; with the method of saying rather than with the thing said.

The technique of an art is the means of expression; it is the messenger, not the message. Technique has grown by degrees as it was needed to express the message more fully, more simply, more forcibly, to bring the matter home to us with greater distinction and beauty, penetratingly, superbly, unforgettably. The technique of the art of painting, which, be it remembered, has grown as it was needed by the artist for the purpose of emphasising his meaning, has become so highly complex, the mediums to his hand are so fluent, and have such possibilities, that it would seem easy for the artist to express himself. The contrary is the case. The technical side of painting is so difficult to master, and so interesting in itself, that the adventures of the messenger become more enthralling to the artist than his message. The message, first and last, is the thing to remember, and to deliver; and if the technical standards of to-day stand in the way, they should be given the go-by, or, better, they should be compelled to the artist's purpose simply to enforce the message.

Of what use are they to the layman, these endless discussions of technique, these heated controversies that have occupied so many artists these thirty years or more? Art is still young enough to address those who know nothing, and need know nothing, about the technique of the art. It is not enough that artists should only address themselves to artists. The real crux of the problem lies in addressing those who know nothing about the technical side of art, in using the resources of the art to reveal to the average intellect, by pictorial treatment, the beauty, the drama, the irony, the humour, the grace, the phantasy, the jollity, the diablerie, the thrill, the mystery, and the romance of life and nature. Singers, masters of their art, can thus charm the uninitiated, and by sheer beauty hold spellbound thousands who know no more about the singers' art than that, when they hear it at its best, they love it. So should it be with pictorial art. Technique is for the workshop and the studio; it is the artist's means of expression, no more, no less. The completed work is for the world at large, neither to fatigue nor puzzle the uninitiated, but to reveal the purpose of the artist, simply, clearly, fully, and with such compelling beauty and character that it is an enchantment and delight to him who sees. This is the way of Shakespeare and Milton, of Michael Angelo, Rembrandt and Ver Meer of Delft. Happily it is also the way of certain artists of to-day, who refuse to be diverted from their purpose by these technical disputes. What does it imply in the artist? That he should know the things that are lovely and of good report, that he should have a broad sympathy and understanding, so that, sure of his means, he can kindle the imagination of those whom he addresses. What does it imply for the "revolutionaries" and "reactionaries"? That they should drop their passionate controversies and get to business: cease their words, and deliver the word that is in them.

So might arise a fresh, vigorous, humane, and opulent period in the arts, full of the joy, the sorrow, and the comedy of life and nature.

Ex-Service

(Dedicated to those, who, being dead, remain heroes.)

By Chris Massie

"Well, after all," said his wife, "it's better than what you had to put up with out there."

The man smiled blankly. He recognised in that assertive exclamation a defence of housekeeping under desperate conditions. When at home he wore his old khaki tunic and trousers to save the waning respectability of a blue serge suit which had bitten so deeply into his war gratuity.

"That's the worst of blue serge," his wife had said. "It do go shiny so quick."

He recognised the disquieting truth himself with the ungrammatical language which presented it. Shoddy things.

His wife was one of the regrettable incidents of the great war—a bye-product of those spurious emotions which had frothed on top of the national hysteria. The glory-hallelujah patriotic business had got him in the stomach somewhere towards the end of 1914. He enlisted, and added the final touches to the melodramatic picture by "getting hold of a pretty girl." Everyone was doing it.

Before the war he could have been accurately described as "a nice boy—respectable parentage." He was then something in the City, a clerk, to be sure, but a clerk with distinct prospects. Good looking, without any impertinent initiative or extravagant ideas, quick at figures and in possession of the *Morning Post*, which his father gave to him every morning to take to business with him, Master Harold Digby had made a very favourable impression on his employers.

He was nineteen when the war broke out, and before he was twenty, Agnes Bone, anxious to change her name and surroundings for something "more refined," had worked her will upon him without him knowing any more about it than the colour of her eyes and the curve of her lips. His

respectable parents, from patriotic motives, had suspended their wrath to the post-war period, when they gave it forth that they washed their hands of "this absurd marriage." Meanwhile, Harold's firm had gone into liquidation, and instead of belonging to the great army of occupation, he found himself reluctantly enlisted in the great army without occupation.

Another difficulty was the baby. He was gradually getting used to this surprising innovation. Arriving home after demobilisation, the child had all the special appeal of an expensive novelty. He wondered—in spite of incontrovertible circumstantial evidence—how it got there, as he might have wondered guiltily at the sudden possession of a motor-car. It was his; and unlike what would have happened in the case of a motor-car, he had got to keep it. He was a parent, a responsible person, a father.

It was rotten luck, but Digby didn't mind roughing it. He took on those initial weeks of unemployment with a great feeling of romance and adventure. He tried hard to get work, drawing his pension on Wednesdays and his unemployment donation on Fridays, and walking out in his new blue serge suit, with its dramatic splash of colour on the waistcoat, on Sundays, with the self-respecting conscience of a soldier citizen. It was true that his wife's eyes and lips did not exercise over him the same fascination. He had good reasons for knowing that her lips were capable of other things beside curves. He was passably happy in those first days, because he trained himself to an absolute disregard of facts. Digby did not square himself to the truth, which daily accumulated abundant evidence, that his marriage was a mistake. "One of them war marriages." He had a fastidious twist in his character which objected to anything nasty. He would have rather faced a full orchestra of German big guns than face that phrase.

They had their little pleasures in spite of the price of food. Once a week, sometimes twice, they went to the nearest picture palace, and the woman sat gloating over the radiantly impossible romances, and enjoying the preposterous vulgarity of smart set interiors. "Wish we 'ad it," she moaned. Her voice was like a dirge. He knew that they were bound in a circumference of mean and provoking anxieties, and there was no escape. His bit of garden was

a diverting factor. He filled it with common flowers, such things as will grow on rough soil—poppies, and wallflowers and marigolds. He visited it every morning, and at night, when he returned from a hopeless search for employment, it cleansed his mind of bitterness. He sat there for hours on Sunday with the child, reasonably proud of the beauty he had effected at such small cost.

With that intuitive brightness which is specially characteristic of women, Mrs. Digby reasoned that the only way to make her husband "buck up" was to do something to this lonely patch of colour in his life. One morning she cut all the finest blooms and, making a bouquet of them, took them to her mother. Then, with the artistic grace of her sex, she confronted her husband on his return.

"I made a bunch of them daisies, and took 'em to mother. I knew you wouldn't mind," she confessed, smoothly.

"Daisies? You don't mean——" He hurried out into the yard and looked helplessly at the denuded garden. Then, hastening back to the kitchen, he looked first at his wife, then at the dinner she had prepared, and deciding it was necessary to take action of some kind, threw his dinner across the room into the sink.

Later, when he had gone upstairs, he heard his wife saying to a neighbour, over the garden wall: "Frou 'is dinner in the sink, all because I gave a few flowers to mother. What d'you fink of 'im?"

He was stone deaf in one ear, but pleasant things like that often assailed the other.

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Deafness is such an invisible affliction. Blindness is self-evident in its tragic pathos, but it requires an effort of imagination to pity a deaf man. Digby had "gone down" with a fractured skull. He was "one of the lucky ones," being picked out of two on top of a trench, the other being a tangle of blood pulp. The fractured skull had affected him so that he was nerve deaf in the right ear. with a constant noise in the head. Asked what it was like, he would say, "It changes. Sometimes it's like the sizzling noise of frying fish, and sometimes it's like bells ringing. It changes, but it always goes on. I think I should miss it if it didn't. I should think I was *really* deaf. Funny, isn't

it? Oh, yes, I can hear pretty well; but I can't locate sound. You might call to me from the right side, and I'd turn to the left, because I heard it there. When I cross a road I can't detect which way a vehicle is coming unless I see it. When you're deaf in one ear, you lose the balance of hearing. Funny, isn't it?"

The Government medical referee, who understood all about it, had recommended him for a pension of fifteen shillings a week for six months, when he was to attend another medical board. The fractured skull, which was the seat of the injury—a serious one—was ignored, and "nerve deafness of the right ear" given as the reason for a pension. The doctor had told him he was not a bad case, because he could hear very well with his left ear. Soldier fashion, he accepted the verdict, dumbly, stupidly.

As time went by, he was dragged in front of Labour Employment Committees, and asked why he was still in receipt of an out-of-work donation. After struggling through indescribable meshes of red tape, he was empowered by the local committee to put in for training as a sign-writer under the Government provision for disabled ex-Service men. He had to find a master sign-writer who would train him according to the Government regulations. After much tramping and a good deal of despairing, he found such a man. He advised the local committee who advised the regional headquarters who advised the advisory committee, who decided that the man who would train him was not the right sort of man.

It was about this time when he purchased some salts of lemon to clean an old straw hat. With the bottle in his hand he played dangerously with the thought of suicide. He was deterred by the uncertainty of the action of the poison, and the ludicrous meanness of murdering himself with some stuff purchased to clean a straw hat to make him fit and proper for life. He also thought casually about his wife, and more intently about his child.

One Friday he visited the Labour Exchange to find that his unemployment donation had been stopped because "the making of certain necessary inquiries necessitated a suspension." The next week he attended the medical board, who reviewed his case, and cut his pension by half. A final award of 7s. 6d.—seven-and-six a week—for 35 weeks—

thirty-five weeks—because "you can hear very nicely with the other ear, Digby, you know. Good morning!"

It is not fair of anyone to insist that the Government is not taking the most stringent measures in the direction of economy.

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Digby made a brown paper parcel of his blue serge suit, and took a long detour to a distant pawnbroker. "I'll ask fifteen," he told himself. "It'll pay the rent and buy a little grub." He stood, rather weakly, not being used to the trade, in the dingy evil-smelling box compartment; and when the pawnbroker opened the parcel and asked his price, his resolution weakened, and he could only stutter, "Ten."

"I'll make it seven," said the pawnbroker. And with that amount of money Digby left the premises.

Dry-mouthed with the intense misery of his position, and a certain abandonment of spirit, he entered a small public-house, the sort of place which is termed in colloquial affection "a booser." A man stood against the bar in a happy state of drunkenness, and greeted him gustily as he entered. "No offence, mate, but you've been in there. I bet you a dollar you've got a pawnbroker's chit on you. They always comes in here after they've been in there."

"If it does you any good to know it," Digby replied. "I have been in there."

"There, don't get huffy," said the man. "Have a drink."

"I'm feeling a bit out of it," said Digby. "I came in for a drink."

"Whisky?"

"Yes, whisky."

He had determined to have beer, but there was a twist in the tail of the whisky which did him good. He began to talk, a little puzzled at the aptitude and fluency of his ideas. "Why, man alive," he said, "all that is needed to solve the out-of-work problem is a ration of bully beef and biscuits; the same as we have often chucked away in the Army. If you could only draw your rations from the quarter-master's stores as usual. They used to say 'as usual,' didn't they? It was a funny life. Not so bad, though. I'd join up again myself, only I got a tap on the nut. Don't think I could stick it. If you could only draw

your rations every morning from the quarter-master's stores it would be all right, wouldn't it?"

The slickness of the thought seemed to fascinate him till the man left, and he stood in moody contemplation of sixpence-halfpenny. At the same moment his eyes wandered to the mirror on the opposite side of the bar, and he noticed three things—the imbecility of his face, the emptiness of the bar, and a till under the counter containing a little pile of notes on which was placed a pile of silver.

He determined to do the thing without fear as he had once schooled himself to go over the top without fear. Without fear or feeling. Fear is only feeling, acute self-consciousness, conceit. "Those damned labour and pension officials," he was thinking as his hand crept over the counter. He saw it reflected in the glass, and traced the position of the till. "Those swines whose entrails are red tape. They've got no mercy, no memory, no imagination; only rules and regulations. Form XB25Z. Case 2075BWL. And that's the bloody country we fought for! The Glorious Dead! Oh! the Glorious Dead are damned lucky to be out of it. . . ."

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He was back in the street. He walked casually as under shell-fire, but with a riot of joy and fear in his brain. He turned the corners of three streets, and knew he was safe. The noise in his head broke out into wild triumphant orchestration, like a jazz band. He ran across a main thoroughfare, and just as he was gaining the opposite curb a taxi-cab caught him in the flank, and he came down with his fractured head on the flags.

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The only bit of luck he had was a thin trickle of conscious life before he died. His wife stood at his bedside in the hospital ward.

"Aggie," he said, "I've got another twenty pounds out of the Army. Didn't think I was entitled to it; but you never can tell in the Army what you are entitled to. You'll collect it from the hospital people here. But don't say anything about it. You know, I might not be entitled to it. . . . Aggie! Aggie! you're here, ain't you? Well, I was sorry about those bits of flowers you took. It was mean . . . What's that? Reveille? All right, sergeant, I'm coming."

Inspiration

By Robert W. S. Mendl

It goes almost without saying that inspiration is not peculiar to music. It belongs equally to any art, and indeed to any mental activity. It may come alike to the poet and the philosopher, to the painter and to the statesman, to the sculptor and to the strategist, to the prophet, to the preacher, and to the man of business. We shall, however, endeavour to confine ourselves to the musical aspect of the matter, though the reader will understand that much of what we have to say would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to many other products of the mind.

By derivation the word "inspiration" means a "breathing into." That which is inspired is something "breathed" by God into man. It may be objected that we owe all mental activities to God. The question may therefore be asked how an inspiration is to be distinguished from any other. Even if we do not agree that all mental activities are due to God, we may answer the objection simply by saying that the stress is on the word "breathed" rather than on the word "God." An inspiration does not form part of our ordinary trend of thought. It is an idea which seems to enter the mind suddenly, and, as it were, from without. Instead of being created by us, it is created for us—planted in our minds unexpectedly and, in some way, without our control. The conception of inspiration implies the negation of human effort. It does not come as the direct and conscious result of deep reasoning or hard thought. In regard to inspiration man is passive, not active.

Yet it is the characteristic of a great mind. This does not mean that a mind which we should not describe as great never receives inspirations; but it receives them in a less degree or less frequently than a great mind.

This implies that, although as regards inspiration itself the mind is passive and not active, a certain quality of receptivity is preconditioned. Perhaps it is just this fitness

to receive inspirations, as it were, which constitutes a mind's greatness.

If this account of greatness of mind be true, the next question is, how is this fitness to receive inspirations attained?

It is just here that human effort does come in. Education and hard work may play an immense part in preparing the mind to receive the message of God. This throws light upon Beethoven and his method of work. It is a familiar fact that even that music of Beethoven's which sounds most spontaneous and most inspired was composed after weeks, months, sometimes years, of intensely hard work, hammering and chiselling ideas into shape, revising, altering, and improving whole passages or whole movements. It might, for a moment, be thought that, in view of this fact, the spontaneity and inspiration of the music in its final form must after all be only apparent. But a little reflection makes it plain that this is not so. It was just the preliminary hard work which put the mind of the great composer into a state of receptivity—which made his mind, so to speak, ready for God. Careful thought, immense toil—and then inspiration came. The result is that in Beethoven the masterful structure—the welding of countless exquisite details into one vast symmetrical whole—is touched, as it were, with the finger of God.

We have said above that inspiration does not come as the direct and conscious result of deep reasoning or hard thought, but that mental effort may yet be a necessary preliminary in order that the mind of the composer may become ripe to receive inspiration. We mean simply that though inspiration is in no sense merely the necessary or natural result of mental effort, yet the latter may be indispensable in preparing the mind of the composer—in tuning it up, so to speak, to the required pitch. As an instance of this we have taken the case of Beethoven.

But there are other composers, like Mozart and Schubert, to whom inspiration came without previous great mental effort. Mozart is said to have composed music while he played billiards, and to have written the overture to *Don Giovanni* in a few hours on the night preceding the first performance of the opera. And even if it be argued that the ideas were in his head long before that night, the fact

remains that he accomplished a feat which would have been impossible for Beethoven. Schubert is said to have conceived and completed his setting of "Who is Sylvia" in a little over half an hour. The vast amount of inspired music produced by both these composers in the course of a short life, in each case, is alone enough to make it plain that composing music did not require prolonged effort on their part.

Let us now return to the consideration which introduced the subject of inspiration into our discussion. We refer to the fact that a musician is often, or largely, unaware of the inspiration which comes to him. This applies not only to composers but also to performers. In this connection, I am reminded of a remark once made to me by an Italian lady in whose company I was listening to a pianoforte recital, given by Backhaus. At the conclusion of Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasie, I remarked to my companion that the pianist's performance of a certain passage in the work had revealed inspiration of a very high order. She replied: "Yes, you know, they do not realise when they are like that."

This unconsciousness of inspiration is, of course, not universal. Beethoven had striven for years to compose a melody for Schiller's "Ode to Joy"; when at last he had set the ode to his own satisfaction, he must have realised fully that at last the inspiration for which he had been hoping had come to him. Yet how many thousands of passages or phrases we meet in the works of all the great masters which strike us as revealing the most supreme inspiration, though the composer never repeats them or even alludes to them again—seems to pass them by, so to speak, unnoticed!

Yet it is just this quality of being inspired which distinguishes the great musician. It is one of the paradoxes of the world that though a great man may be quite aware of his own genius, yet to a large extent he himself is not conscious of the inspired moments which most of all entitle him to be called a genius.

Wharton Woodley

By Douglas Goldring

It was, I think, in the old Jermyn Street bar of the Criterion Restaurant that I first encountered Wharton Woodley. A friend who had successfuly borrowed a considerable sum on the security of a reversionary interest in his grandfather's estate, had been advising me to follow his example. "I know a fellow who can fix it up for you," he remarked one evening, after we had been discussing our respective finances. "He's an awfully decent old boy called Wharton Woodley. He's usually in the Cri bar about this time. Let's go and see if we can find him." I was nothing loth, so we left our rooms, which were over a tobacconist's shop at the Haymarket end of Jermyn Street, and walked across the road.

Wharton Woodley, as my friend had predicted, was sitting before a glass-topped table absorbing a brandy and soda, and puffing contentedly at what appeared to be an excellent cigar. He was, I suppose, a man of about fifty-five—well-preserved, well valeted, festive, and clearly that thrilling thing "a man of the world." His little dead stone-grey eyes seemed to smile at us benignly and his blonde moustache had geniality expressed in every hair.

He appealed to me from the first. His fund of good stories was as inexhaustible as his memory. When my friend invited him to dine with us, I was delighted. We went to Prince's grill-room, and I don't know when I have spent a more amusing evening. Over our port there was some talk of my reversion; and I remember being struck with the fact that Woodley—in contrast with his manners and appearance—was remarkably businesslike. He produced a silver-cased pencil and an envelope, and made calculations on it of various kinds. "I should think you ought to be able to borrow at least £1,000 on that security," he remarked at last. "I'll tell you what. If you like I'll take you round to

Baldock, my solicitor, to-morrow morning. He's a very good fellow. Do anything for me. He'll fix it up for you." My gratitude was immense. I thanked him cordially, and kept the appointment. The firm occupied a top floor in Lower Regent Street—a queer place, as I thought even then, for a firm of solicitors. On our arrival we were shown into a comfortable office, where Mr. Baldock sat behind a flat mahogany desk. In an armchair near by reposed his partner, Mr. Meredith.

Young as I was, the appearance of Mr. Meredith alarmed me. I was nervous of his fleshy, pronounced nose, his scarlet lips, the sparkle of his diamond tie-pin, the glitter of his eyes and rings. Anxious as I was to borrow the money, some of the prudence possessed by the astute grandfather who had made a fortune (and left a minute portion of it in trust for myself and my brothers and sisters) rose up in me. I determined not to commit myself, to get out of the place at all costs, without signing any documents. My suspicions once aroused, a thousand tiny incidents conspired to feed them. I was amazed that Woodley's solicitors treated him in such an off-hand way. Woodley's humble persuasiveness before these two men frightened me also. Was he hoping to get something out of it? Was he in their pay? Were these people not solicitors at all, but merely money-lenders? Their behaviour to me was affability itself. They were super-affable. I gave them particulars of my grandfather's will, and they pretended to remember him at the bar, although he had not practised for at least thirty years. I told them my age—twenty-one last week—and they beamed at me. They would, they said, dispatch one of their clerks to Somerset House that morning; if the will was in order the matter could be put through very quickly. There would be a few documents to prepare. Nothing elaborate! There would, of course, be certain costs usual in such cases. If I liked to call on the following morning at the same time the little matter could probably be arranged straightaway. They were really too kind. The sparkling gentleman asked me if I was at Oxford, when I hoped to get my degree, and so forth. "My boy was at New College," he observed. "I suppose you young undergrads still buy ze bad vine," he went on. "Ze Oxford vine, no goot! My boy, he always gets me to send him a

few dozen of port from my own vine merchant. Nod like ze Oxford vine merchants' poison. Vould you like zom, hey?" I shook him warmly by the hand, thanked him, and departed hastily. Woodley came with me and we lunched together. "Not a bad chap, Meredith, really, when you get to know him," Woodley remarked, rather apologetically. "As for Baldock, he's absolutely one of the best. Hunts three days a week in the season, with the Stainforth. His uncle's the M.F.H., you know."

I had forgotten Baldock till Woodley reminded me of him. I remembered now the insignificant part he had played in our negotiations. He had merely repeated, with some pomposity and in a gentlemanlike accent, the observations of Meredith. Baldock was a man of about thirty-five, with a black moustache, dissipated eyes, and a rather loud tie. He had made very little impression upon me, and that little had not been good.

In my dealings with Messrs. Baldock and Meredith fortune favoured me. It so happened that I had arranged to dine on the evening of my visit to them with my Aunt Mary, who lived in South Kensington. Her husband, my Uncle Robert, was a Parliamentary barrister of some eminence—a K.C. and a Bencher of his Temple. He was not a man whom one could describe as being filled with the milk of human kindness. He was sarcastic, pompous, rather bloodless and intolerant, and not at all easy to get on with. His friends were eminent judges, and he himself, though not called to the highest honours of his profession, was—in an amateur capacity—for ever judging and condemning. He had had, however, to give him his due, a genuine affection for my mother, who had been his favourite sister, and after her death he had on many occasions exerted himself to be amiable to her children. I knew quite well that I could consult him with perfect confidence in regard to Baldock and Meredith. He would scold me, of course, for not having consulted him at first, but his advice would be valuable. I suspected somewhere in my uncle's make-up a streak of real "decency." He really wasn't a bad sort where respectable people were concerned—but the *non-respectable!* Whenever he dealt with them, he assumed the black cap.

My uncle did not smoke, but when I was his guest the

port-wine decanter was carried into a singularly cold and cheerless study, where I was allowed, as a concession, to consume one of my own cigarettes. (There was a legend that the room contained, somewhere, a box of "really good" Egyptians, which had been purchased some years previously from the Army and Navy Stores, for the benefit of some visitor of extreme distinction. Luckily that box was never found when I was in the house!)

When, on the evening of my encounter with Baldock and with Meredith, I had accompanied my uncle into the glacial study, I began at once upon my story. He put the tips of his fingers together, lifted his head, pursed his lips, and looked at me superciliously over the tops of his eye-glasses. "What did you say was the name of the man who introduced you to these sharks?" he enquired, when my recital was over. "Wharton Woodley?"

He got up and went to the bookshelf and pulled down several volumes in turn of the Law List. At last he found what he wanted. "I thought as much," he growled. "I remember the man perfectly now. Bankrupt solicitor. Ought to have been prosecuted a score of times. Inherited quite a good class of business from his father. Then he took to company promoting, and failed for a quarter of a million. . . Started again, and failed a second time for £40,000. He ought to have been struck off the rolls, but wasn't. The man's a specious scoundrel. Money-lender's tout of the worst kind. The less you see of him and of his precious 'friends' the better for you. They'll rob you of every penny you can hope to possess . . ." He went on in this strain for some time, until I felt thoroughly uncomfortable; and then he proceeded to tell me how, "if I really had to have the money," I could get it at 5 per cent. I was relieved when we rejoined my aunt in the vast expanses of her drawing-room, which—with its waving palm-trees in enormous china pots, its gilded mirrors and remote ceiling—reminded me of an ante-room to the Kingdom of Heaven as conceived by a Presbyterian imagination. But all the evening, as we discussed cousins and aunts and grandmothers ("very frail now") and great-aunts, still frailer, who lived at Leamington Spa, my thoughts kept returning to Wharton Woodley. What an extraordinary thing is personal charm! You cannot seize it and label it,

you cannot define it; nor—whatever bad things they may do—can you be really indignant with those who possess it. For Wharton Woodley's sake I felt almost sorry that I had been rescued from the clutches of Baldock and of Meredith. If they lent me £1,000, Woodley, as my uncle explained, would certainly get £50 of it for having decoyed me. I *wanted* him to have his £50. I knew how glad of it he would be. He *liked* his cigars so much; he enjoyed the good cooking to which he had been all his life accustomed; he appreciated his brandy and soda before dinner in the "Cri" bar. And I could imagine him lending £10 at least of that £50 to some undeserving old crony more indigent even than himself.

My aunt began to talk, with a pride as tightly laced in as her own figure about "the Judge" who was coming to dine next week. "Lady Purse is such a charming woman," she observed. "Marjorie (a cousin) and her daughter were presented at the same Drawing-room. They are great friends. Norah Purse paints really beautifully. I believe she is going to exhibit." My aunt mouthed the word "exhibit" as if it were in the same category with Mesopotamia. I felt that the painting done by Lady Purse's daughter would be no ordinary art. It would be refined, it would have "soul" in it. Many of the things would be sweetly pretty, and Marjorie would admire them. And Marjorie's mother. And the whole of Collingham Gardens, and of Bramham Gardens, and of Nevern Gardens. Queen's Gate would say "Charming! Charming!" (And I—flesh of Marjorie's flesh, blood of Marjorie's blood—I should say "*Merde!*" to myself before each masterpiece—I knew it!)

Strange are the mysteries of our blood and instinct. I am sure it is an excellent thing to belong to the wealthier half of our English middle-class, to attend Drawing-rooms, to achieve knighthood, to ally yourself with one of your kind and to provide her with a vast salon in which the tallest of palms may aspire towards a far-off stucco ceiling, yet never attain it. But to be as I am, half bourgeois, half Bohemian—half Forsyte and half Bosinney—is a tragic affair. It condemns you to a cat-and-dog existence, in which the joys and impulses of one-half of your nature are perpetually frowned upon and inhibited by the other half.

Your bourgeois self leads you to the sepulchral dinner tables of your bourgeois kith and kin, utters on your behalf the appropriate small talk, listens respectfully to an account of the doings of "the Judge" and of his desirable and satisfactorily endowed daughter. And all the time your Bohemian *alter ego* is in revolt, mutters inconvenient comments in the French language, and finally—taking the bit between his teeth—hurries you away from all that is solid and successful, to some low haunt of indigence and vice, where you may find waiting for you, not "the Judge"—but Wharton Woodley.

This is what happened to me on the present occasion. The "Forsyte" half of me enabled me to act upon my uncle's advice, to write (at his dictation) a note to Baldock and Meredith, and thus to rescue from their clutches my tiny patrimony. But the "Bosinney" element in my composition led me, on the succeeding evening, to the "Cri" bar and entangled me in a friendship with Woodley which lasted until his death.

Woodley and I had one great bond in common—we were both Londoners, with a passion for the town almost greater than any other passion. Although he was in years more than old enough to be my father, he retained a sort of boyish irresponsibility which made it impossible to remember the difference in our ages. In his day he had belonged to the Pink 'Un group, and his conversation when he was in his best form was very nearly as good as the "Gal's Gossip" of the inimitable Binstead. His stories of Romano's in its great days, when it was frequented by the Amphibious Otter and the Dwarf of Blood, lent a glamour to that restaurant which, as far as I am concerned, has never deserted it. His great crony in his period of affluence was the lamented J—— B——, whose Sloane Street dinner parties (the host arriving five minutes before his guests with the champagne on the top of a four wheeled cab, and the bailiff's men waiting in the hall in livery) must have been the gayest on record.

To me, as an impassioned playgoer, Woodley's theatrical memories were an inexhaustible fund of interest. The most fascinating chapters in the social history of London have always seemed to me to be those which somehow never get written down. They concern bygone singers

and dancers, forgotten songs, far-off dissipations, long-defunct clubs. "Two lovely black eyes, oh, what a surprise!"—how much or how little does that convey to you? "Daddy won't buy me a bow-wow"—does that, when you hear it, recall a ghost to life? In Woodley's and in my father's generation, a song, however idiotic, sung by a pretty woman, would draw the town in a way which nowadays seems incredible. Fifty years ago you could talk safely about "all London." To-day, what is London? A congeries of boroughs, an urban nation? It is no longer "town" in the older sense. It has lost its distinctively English character; and even its particular art, the art of the music-hall, has almost disappeared. The Gaiety chorus and the personalities of Marie Lloyd, Victoria Monks, Vesta Tilley, George Robey, George Lashwood and Little Tich, form almost the only links between my London and Wharton Woodley's. When, as happens occasionally, the great ones of the past are impersonated, and I hear in a modern revue the queer words of such songs as "Champagne Charlie is my name," or "Over the garden wall," or "Daisy, Daisy," I never notice that any of my contemporaries are anything but bored. I thrill with my elders, and am unable to explain why I do so, any more than I can explain the peculiar emotions which assail me when I visit Verrey's Café, or Rule's, or any other house in London about which still lingers the faint aroma of 1870.

Woodley's clerks and his partner were all superb young men: and even when his business was *in extremis*, and all his great schemes had failed, "the Sergeant," in the commissionaire's impressive uniform, ushered in the creditors in a manner befitting the firm's dignity. Woodley, as I soon discovered, was a man of exceptional ability. I do not believe that he was really dishonest. He was an extraordinarily innocent man, in some ways; very trustful, pitifully sanguine. Even whilst I knew him he was at times very shabbily deceived. His schemes, which failed in his own hands, nearly always succeeded in other people's. I think he must have been deliberately used by astute business men who lacked his genius for "flotation." He was connected with companies which built, in the 'eighties and 'nineties of the last century, some grandiose (and still famous) hotels. The original companies, of course,

collapsed, and the sharks took over the derelict enterprises at a fraction of their value. They made fortunes, while Woodley did his best to explain matters at Carey Street. Really to be a rogue you must be a successful one: Woodley (I like to think) came to grief because of his virtues.

He had astonishing virtues. About a year after I first knew him I went down to Pinner to make the acquaintance of his wife and daughter, to whom (as I had already gathered) he was devotedly attached. Then was revealed a new side to his character—the domestic side. Mrs. Woodley was one of the most pathetic women I have ever seen. She lived, poor dear, entirely in her own past. She loved, with a love which had in it hardly anything snobbish, "Society." Those long vanished parties in Victoria Street, when Lord K—— (her star turn) was so excruciatingly amusing; those winters at Monte Carlo, those summers at Le Touquet—how she gloated over them in retrospect! How amusing they were, and how happy she had been, poor soul! What dinners, what dances, what card-parties, what delightful follies! Now everything had crumbled away. They had preserved (through all the bankruptcies, bailiffs, forced sales, and so forth) a few pieces of very beautiful inherited furniture: and even in their dire need they continued to have their scanty meals served to them by a butler. He was rather down at heel (like his employers), and if I remember right, he padded round the table in unlaced tennis shoes. Still, he was a butler. Of Miss Woodley I cannot write without emotion. The brilliant marriage which she was to have made, on which her own and her parents' hopes were set, had never come off. She had fallen passionately in love with an adventurer of good family who had believed that Woodley was a rich man. After the crash he had been too dishonest to break off his engagement—or, if you prefer it, some remnants of "good feeling" had prevented him from doing so. For seven years the poor girl had remained faithful. Then, when she was thirty-two, her man had married incontinently a widow with a competence. She was a very well-educated and charming girl, but when I met her she was already "queer." Subsequently, after Woodley's death, she became still queerer. For how many tragedies of the kind are our social

shibboleths responsible! Outraged Nature will, I suppose, continue to wreak her vengeance on the most virtuous and charming women just so long as "the broken heart" remains a sentimental fetich.

At dinner, Woodley suggested opening for me a very ancient and probably ullaged bottle of Perrier-Jouet (more salvage from the wreck). I was shown the bottle, where it lay in the sideboard, but I maintained with the utmost heartiness my preference for beer. I wasn't going to deprive him of his chance of giving expression in the future to a truly hospitable instinct.

The happiness Woodley had in his home was immensely touching; and the devotion of the three of them to each other and to the absent son (he was away in one of the Colonies and probably kept the home going by his occasional remittances) was beautiful to see. I gathered that in Pinner they contrived to be personages of some social standing. No one, indeed, could help liking them.

It is eleven years ago, now, since my dear friend died. He caught a cold one Christmas, went to bed and collapsed. The doctors who examined him, seeing his condition, could not imagine how he had kept going so long.

I remember that Woodley often used to say to me that when he came to die he hoped he would first be able to enjoy a really good cigar, and that he would like to watch the sun set as he smoked it. It is a consolation to know that he had his wish. They propped him up with pillows, and they found him a Havana of the very best. The sun was setting as he took his first puff—they drew aside the window curtains so that he could watch it—and when he had finished his cigar his heart stopped beating.

Is there anything more pathetic than the life of pleasure?

THEATRE-CRAFT

Editors: Hermon Ould and Horace Shipp

EDITORIAL.

We make our bow to our host and to our readers, old and new.

To those friends whom we are bringing with us, we would take this opportunity of saying that only to outward seeming has Theatre-Craft changed. The virtue has not gone out of it. We needed a wider public, a more regular appearance, and the opportunity of attaining these came with the offer of amalgamation with the English Review.

To our new readers a word or two about the policy of the Section may not be superfluous. Theatre-Craft has always held itself to be a channel for anything which makes towards a worth-while theatre; it has always striven to attain equipoise between exclusiveness and catholicity. The Theatre offers a wide field for exploitation, and while we have excluded from our pages matter which seemed to us unworthy of serious attention, we have always given houseroom to ideas which were intrinsically interesting, whether we shared them or not.

We propose to maintain the same policy now that Theatre-Craft has become an integral part of the English Review. All articles and designs will be signed, and their authors will accept the credit for them.

We shall deal somewhat more fully with the contemporary theatre than was practicable in a quarterly magazine.

A word about the contents of the present issue: It will be part of our policy sometimes to publish short plays, and in this issue we are able to print a new one-act play by John Drinkwater. The two scene designs by the American artist, Hermann Rosse, foreshadow an exhibition of his work which will be held at the Dorien Leigh Gallery in November; we hope to refer to it at greater length in our next number.

Little Johnny*

By John Drinkwater

CHARACTERS.

THOMAS QUALE.	THE PRISONER.
ELLEN QUALE, *his wife.*	A K.C.
JANE QUALE, *his daughter.*	MR. BYNG (*for the defence*).
MARTHA QUALE, *his mother.*	THE JUDGE.
MRS. TOLLER, *his sister.*	SERGEANT PRICE.
WILLIAM SHARP.	A CLERK.
A DOCTOR.	AN USHER.

Counsel, Barristers, Jurymen, Clerks, Ushers, etc.

The Assize Court in a small county town in the South of England, about 1820. It is an afternoon of the Winter Assizes.

The twelfth man of a Jury consisting of farmers, small tradesmen, and one or two of the gentry is being sworn in. Two or three Counsel are at their papers, and one is speaking to the JUDGE. *On Counsel's table are an old cloth cap, a woollen muffler, and a dull red ball of wound worsted.*

Along the Witnesses' bench are seated a girl of sixteen, a woman of thirty-eight, a man of forty-five, being THOMAS QUALE, *a farmer, his wife and daughter;* WILLIAM SHARP, *his young carter of twenty;* MRS. TOLLER, QUALE'S *sister, a woman of fifty;* MRS. QUALE, *his mother, nearly eighty; and a* DOCTOR.

The K.C. *leaves his consultation with the* JUDGE *and returns to his seat. As he fingers the articles of evidence before him and talks to a young Barrister at his side, the* CLERK *speaks.*

THE CLERK. Bring up the prisoner, James Bennett.

(The PRISONER *is brought into the dock. He is a lean-faced, unshaven tramp, tall, hungry, and quick-eyed.)*

THE CLERK. James Bennett, you are charged that on the afternoon of Tuesday, August the twenty-ninth of this present year, between the hours of two and five in the afternoon, you did feloniously and wilfully murder John Quale, aged eleven, by Weston Coppice, in the hundred of Palebury, in the county of Wiltshire. Are you guilty or not guilty?

THE PRISONER. Not guilty.

THE K.C. (*who has been speaking to the Judge, rising*).

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My lord, gentlemen of the jury. I shall show that on the said Tuesday, August the twenty-ninth, the boy John Quale left his home at Palebury at two o'clock. His mother told him to return at three. He did not do so, and two hours later, his father Thomas Quale, his daughter Jane, and William Sharp, Quale's carter, went out to look for him. The places where the boy was used to play were well known to them, and at half-past five the father found the boy's body in a ditch on the south side of Weston Coppice. Medical evidence shows that death was due to strangulation. The police, who if I may say so have handled this case with great acumen (*this to a florid Sergeant, who takes a glance from the Court*), for a time were at a loss. There was no one upon whom suspicion could possibly fall, nor had anyone been seen in the boy's company, though three or four witnesses had seen him walking in the direction of the Coppice. The only clue was in certain articles of clothing, and a toy, that were missing. The prisoner, James Bennett, was known to have been in the district for some ten days, and the police, with what you will in due time I think agree with me was remarkable intuition, arrested him on the evening of August the thirty-first. Questioned as to his movements on the afternoon of the twenty-ninth, he said that he was at Skardon, a place ten miles distant, but he has been unable to produce any evidence in support of that testimony, and William Sharp will tell you that he saw him on that afternoon in the neighbourhood of Quale's Farm. When he was arrested—and this, my lord, gentlemen of the jury, is the sum of my story—he had in his possession a cloth cap, a woollen muffler, and a red worsted ball, as to each of which you will hear a succession of witnesses tell you, upon oath, that they belonged to John Quale, and that he had them with him when he left home on that fatal afternoon. The prisoner has offered no satisfactory explanation as to how he came by these things. It is not for me, my lord, gentlemen of the jury, to discover motives, nor do I pretend to say why a guilty man should carry about with him incriminating evidence of this kind. It is, rather, for the defence to explain why the prisoner should lie as to his whereabouts on the afternoon of the crime, and to make plausible at once his innocence and his possession of these things from the murdered boy's body. To do that,

I suggest, will tax the ingenuity even of my learned friend. Sergeant Price. (*The florid* SERGEANT *is sworn.*)

THE K.C. When did you arrest the prisoner?

THE SERGEANT. At seven o'clock on the evening of Thursday, August the thirty-first.

THE K.C. Did you charge him with the murder of John Quale?

THE SERGEANT. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. What did he say?

THE SERGEANT. He denied the charge, sir.

THE K.C. And then?

THE SERGEANT. That he was at Skardon on the afternoon of August the twenty-ninth.

THE K.C. What did you find on him?

THE SERGEANT. Among other things, sir, a cloth cap, a woollen muffler, and a red worsted ball.

THE K.C. Were these the articles?

THE SERGEANT (*examining them*). Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Thank you.

MR. BYNG (*for the defence*). I have nothing to ask.

(*The* SERGEANT *leaves the box.*)

THE K.C. Dr. Spence, please.

(*The* DOCTOR *goes into the box and is sworn.*)

THE K.C. You are Dr. Laidlaw Spence?

THE DOCTOR. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Were you called in the early evening of Tuesday, August the twenty-ninth, to Quale's Farm at Palebury, and did you arrive at six o'clock, and did you there examine the dead body of the boy John Quale?

THE DOCTOR. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. To what conclusion did you come?

THE DOCTOR. That he had been dead at least three and at most four hours, and that he had been strangled.

THE K.C. Thank you, doctor.

(*The* K.C. *sits as* MR. BYNG, *counsel for the defence, rises. He is large, confident, loud, but bland at will.*)

MR. BYNG. Strangulation, you say, doctor?

THE DOCTOR. Unquestionably.

THE K.C. Quite so. Yes. Er—quite so. Thank you, Doctor—er Dr. Laidlaw Spence, yes. Thank you.

(*The* DOCTOR *leaves the box.*)

THE K.C. William Sharp, please.

(The young carter is sworn. He is slow, not very bright, but sure of his answers.)

THE K.C. You are William Sharp, Mr. Quale's carter?

SHARP. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Have you ever seen the prisoner before?

SHARP. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Where and when?

SHARP. Often, in the village and about, sir.

THE K.C. Did you see him on Tuesday afternoon, August the twenty-ninth?

SHARP. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Where?

SHARP. Passing by Quale's Farm, sir.

THE K.C. At what hour?

SHARP. About half-past one, sir. I'd just finished my dinner.

THE K.C. That is all, thank you. (*He sits, and* MR. BYNG *rises.*)

MR. BYNG. Are you sure it was the prisoner?

SHARP. Yes, sir.

MR. BYNG. How?

SHARP. When I sees a man, I know.

MR. BYNG. William Sharp is your name, eh? Very well, young man, you may go.

THE K.C. (*rising as Mr. Byng sits*). Thomas Quale.

*(*THOMAS QUALE *goes into the witness-box and is sworn.)*

THE K.C. Your name is Thomas Quale?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. John Quale was your son?

QUALE. Yes, sir, little Johnny were my son.

THE K.C. On Tuesday, August the twenty-ninth, did your family have dinner together at one o'clock, and was little—er, your son John with you?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. And after dinner did he ask to be allowed to go out and play?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. And what happened?

QUALE. Little Johnny's mother—that's my wife, sir—told him he could go, and that he were to be back at three.

THE K.C. When he left was the family still at table?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. You saw him go out?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Did he put a cap on?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Was that the cap? Look carefully. (*It is handed up to Quale, who examines it, and hands it back.*)

QUALE. Yes, sir, that were the cap.

THE K.C. Did he put on a muffler?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. That muffler? (*The formality is repeated.*)

QUALE. Yes, sir, that were the muffler.

THE K.C. Did you notice that he took anything else in particular?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. What?

QUALE. He went to a cupboard and took out a ball from the top shelf. He had to stand on a stool.

THE K.C. Was that the ball? (*It is handed up.*)

QUALE. Yes, sir, that were the ball.

THE K.C. Now tell us what happened then.

QUALE. Little Johnny didn't come back at three. It was near four when his mother came out to the barn, where I were working with William Sharp there. She were all of a flurry, and though I weren't uneasy myself, sir, I must say that Johnny were never later than he were told. So William Sharp went down Bagnall way and I went with my girl Jane up to Weston, and I asked Mr. Dollins—that's my neighbour at the Marshes, sir—if he'd seen little Johnny go that way, and he said, yes, and so did Jonas and Thisbe up in the field beyond. So I went on, and walked round the Coppice, and in the ditch at top of Square Meadow I found him. He were dead, sir.

THE K.C. Did you notice anything particularly?

QUALE. Only that he were dead, sir.

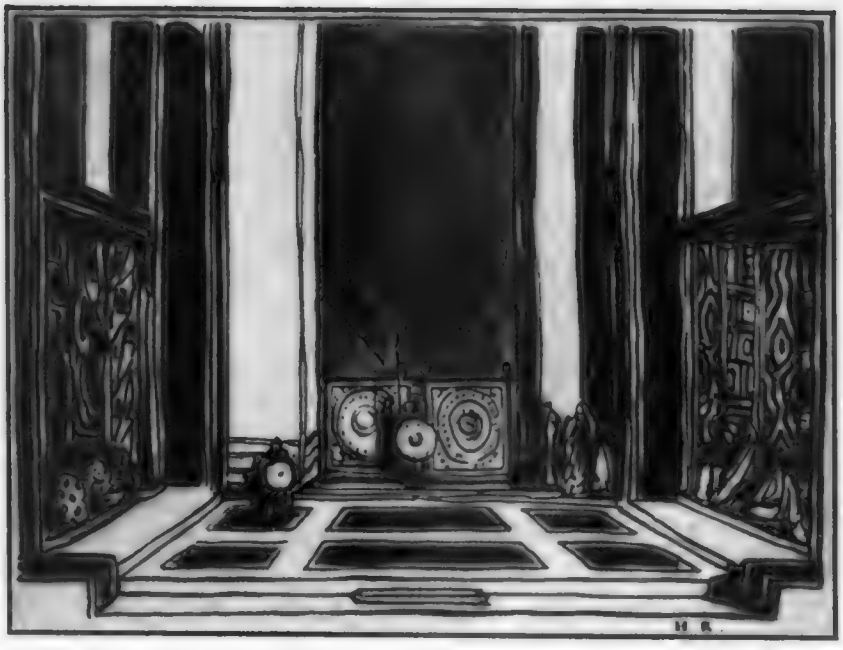
THE K.C. Any disorder?

QUALE. I can't say that I noticed anything just then, sir. But afterwards I saw he hadn't his cap on, and the muffler had gone from his neck.

THE K.C. And the ball?

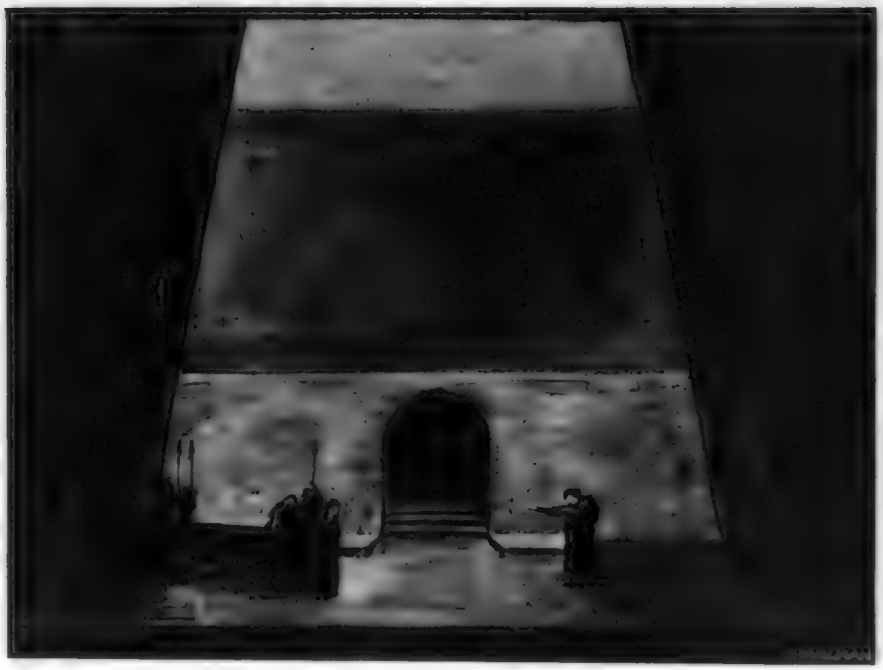
Scene design for Milton's Comus, a Masque, by Hermann Rosse.

The effect is obtained by the skilful use of a painted curtain, pierced and part lighted from behind, augmented by the built-up bower and the lights carried by the players.



An arrangement of the stage for a Play of the Early Middle Ages

This setting by Hermann Rosse shows a characteristic dependence upon good line, colour, and proportion to achieve a mediæval setting wherein his figures can move unhindered.



Setting by Emil Pirchan for
Richard III, Act I
(Berlin State Theatre)

Setting by Emil Pirchan for
Richard III, Act IV
(Berlin State Theatre)

QUALE. We didn't think about that, sir, until it were shown to us after the prisoner had been arrested.

THE K.C. And your daughter Jane was with you when you found the body?

QUALE. She were, sir, poor lass.

THE K.C. Thank you. (*He sits, and* MR. BYNG *rises.*)

MR. BYNG. Thomas Quale, I am entirely sensitive of the very painful position in which you are placed. A sorrow has fallen upon your life which must move the coldest heart. But this is a court of justice, and it is my duty to ask such questions as I may think will serve the interests of justice. Ahem. And, my lord, gentlemen of the jury, I should like here to make one or two general observations which may be a prelude, as it were, to what I may have to say at the close of this trial. Yes. My learned friend for the prosecution has laid stress on the fact that the prisoner asserts that he was some miles away from the scene of the crime at the hour of its committal, whereas he produces a witness to show that the prisoner was in fact in the—er—guilty neighbourhood, as you may say. The witness is entirely unsupported, and, although his name is William Sharp, I venture to suppose that, ahem, he can hardly have impressed you, gentlemen, with any marked quality of intelligence. But be that as it may, gentlemen, it would be a thing within the experience of every criminal court for an innocent man to make a statement upon arrest that belied the facts. And in any case, I should like here to say that the defence does not propose to follow this line at all. Allow the prisoner, if you will, to have been in the neighbourhood of Palebury on the afternoon in question. The salient point is this. All the prosecution can bring against my client is that he had, at the time of his arrest, certain articles presumed to have been taken from the body of little Johnny. While I cannot admit that, even if this were so, it would be conclusive, I allow that you might, gentlemen, be prejudiced against the prisoner by this circumstance. But, since this is the sole support upon which the prosecution relies, it must at least be clear that my learned friend should establish beyond any question that these things, taken from the boy's body, were in fact in the prisoner's possession at the time of arrest. If I am able to

discredit this suggestion, then, I submit, there is no possible case against the prisoner. It will be my business to ask the witness now before you certain questions with this submission in view, and, if I may read the mind of the prosecution, so to examine later witnesses as well. Quite so. Thomas Quale, I am concerned with but one part of your evidence. Will you please take that cap in your hand. (*The cap is given to Quale.*) You say that it belonged to little Johnny?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

MR. BYNG. Is there any distinguishing mark upon it?

QUALE. Mark, sir?

MR. BYNG. Mark was the word, sir.

QUALE. This were little Johnny's cap, sir.

MR. BYNG. A very ordinary kind of cap, Mr. Quale, if I may say so.

QUALE. I suppose it is, sir.

MR. BYNG. Some dozens of caps like that must be sold every month in Salisbury?

QUALE. Yes, I suppose they might be, sir.

MR. BYNG. You know they must be. Come, now.

QUALE. That would be so, I've no doubt, sir.

MR. BYNG. Thomas Quale, you are on oath.

QUALE. Yes, sir.

MR. BYNG. Do you swear that that cap belonged to little Johnny?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

MR. BYNG. Can you swear that the cap could not have belonged to some other little boy?

QUALE. How's that, sir?

MR. BYNG. Be careful now, Quale. That very ordinary cap—can you swear that it did not belong to some other little boy?

QUALE. Well, sir——

MR. BYNG. Can you?

QUALE. Well, sir, of course——

MR. BYNG. Answer my question. Can you?

QUALE. Not to swear it, so to speak——

MR. BYNG. Thank you. Look at that muffler. (*The muffler is handed up.*) Is there any distinguishing mark upon it?

QUALE. No, sir.

MR. BYNG. Do you swear it was little Johnny's?

QUALE. It were little Johnny's.

MR. BYNG (*holding up a cardboard box*). You see this box?

QUALE. Yes, sir.

MR. BYNG (*opening it*). It contains six mufflers. It was bought in Salisbury yesterday. Evidence will be called to show that twenty such boxes could have been bought there any time these three years past. Each of these mufflers is identical with the one in your hand. Now, Mr. Quale, do you swear that that muffler in your hand could not have belonged to some little boy other than little Johnny?

QUALE. If you put it like that, sir——

MR. BYNG. I do put it like that, sir.

QUALE. It's difficult to say——

MR. BYNG. You did not find it difficult to swear.

QUALE. I were sure of it.

MR. BYNG. Are you sure now?

QUALE. Sure, as you might say, sir.

MR. BYNG. Come now. You swore that that muffler belonged to little Johnny. After seeing that box and hearing what I have said, can you now swear that it could have belonged to no other little boy?

QUALE. Well, no, sir.

MR. BYNG. Then how can you swear that it belonged to little Johnny?

QUALE. I don't know, sir.

MR. BYNG. Thank you. Look at that ball. (*The ball is handed up.*) I understand that this is a plaything very common in your countryside. Here I have a selection of them. (*He produces half a dozen balls indistinguishable from the one in evidence.*) Can you tell one from the other?

QUALE. I couldn't say that, sir.

MR. BYNG. You have sworn that the one you have was little Johnny's.

QUALE. Yes, sir.

MR. BYNG. How could you do that?

QUALE. I thought——

MR. BYNG. You thought—you swore it.

QUALE. You see, sir——

MR. BYNG. That will do, Quale, thank you.

(*He sits, and* QUALE *leaves the box.*)

THE K.C. (*rising*). Jane Quale.

(*The girl goes into the box and is sworn.*)

THE K.C. You are Jane Quale, sister of John Quale?

JANE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. You heard what your father said about finding your brother. Was that the truth?

JANE. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. You see these three things. Do you recognise them?

JANE. They were my brother's.

THE K.C. You are sure?

JANE (*with a glance at Byng*). I think so, sir.

THE K.C. Thank you. (*He sits.*)

MR. BYNG (*rising*). You think so, Jane.

JANE. Yes, sir.

MR. BYNG. My lord, I submit——

THE JUDGE. Yes, yes, I follow you, Mr. Byng. It is not necessary to go over your point again.

MR. BYNG. Quite so, my lord. Thank you, Jane, you may go. (*He sits.* JANE *leaves the box.*)

THE K.C. (*rising*). Ellen Quale.

(MRS. QUALE, JOHNNY'S *mother, is sworn.*)

THE K.C. You are Ellen Quale, the dead boy's mother?

ELLEN. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. You corroborate your husband's evidence as to your son's leaving home on Tuesday afternoon, August the twenty-ninth, at two o'clock?

ELLEN. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Wearing a cloth cap, a woollen muffler, and taking a worsted ball, a plaything?

ELLEN. Yes, sir.

THE K.C. Were these the cap, the muffler, and the ball?

ELLEN (*examining them*). Yes, sir.

THE K.C. How do you know?

ELLEN. I've seen them a hundred times, sir.

THE K.C. But you have heard what my learned friend says. How are you sure?

ELLEN. A mother knows, sir.

THE K.C. You have no doubt?

ELLEN. None at all, sir.

THE K.C. Thank you. (*He sits.*)

MR. BYNG (*rising*). Mrs. Quale, I want to spare you as much as possible. I am sure that I respect the wishes of the Court in that. But a man is being tried for his life, and at the moment his interests must stand even before a mother's feelings, Mrs. Quale. You say that you are sure that these things were little Johnny's. Why do you say that?

ELLEN. I know by the look of them, sir, I might say the touch. I've put that muffler round Johnny's neck many's the time.

MR. BYNG. You are sure, that muffler?

ELLEN. As though it were my own bodice, sir.

MR. BYNG. And you are sure, too, about the cap and the ball?

ELLEN. Quite, sir.

MR. BYNG. Will you kindly hand me the ball? (*She does so.*) Now in this ball I stick a black pin, thus. (*He does so, and takes two of the other balls in front of him.*) Now, here are three balls. (*He makes a few passes with them in his hands, walks up to the witness-box, and places the three balls on the shelf in front of her.*) Will you kindly tell the jury which of those balls was little Johnny's?

THE K.C. (*rising*). My lord, I protest——

THE JUDGE. I think it must be allowed, Mr. Turvey.

MR. BYNG. Which one?

ELLEN (*hesitating*). I think that—no, that one.

MR. BYNG. Exactly. Will you please take that ball up? (*She does so.*) Will you please draw out that pin?

(ELLEN *looks for it in vain.*)

ELLEN. It isn't here, sir.

MR. BYNG. It is not, Mrs. Quale. Because that is not the ball that you have sworn was little Johnny's. This is the one, and here is the pin. (*He draws it out and returns to his seat.*) Gentlemen of the jury, I do not think that I need ask this witness any further questions. Thank you, Mrs. Quale, that will do. (*He sits.*)

(MRS. QUALE *leaves the box.*)

THE K.C. (*rising*). My lord, gentlemen of the jury, I have two further witnesses, John Quale's aunt and his grandmother, in support of the evidence already given.

But in view of the line taken by the learned counsel for the defence, I do not propose to put them into the box.

OLD MRS. QUALE. Eh?—what's that—aren't I to be heard? Those things were little Johnny's——

AN USHER. Silence in court.

THE K.C. Enough has been said to enable you, gentlemen of the jury, to form your own conclusions. The ingenious attempt of my learned friend to discredit evidence that has on every word the stamp of conviction is in itself, I submit, proof of the weakness of his case.

OLD MRS. QUALE. He knows they were little Johnny's.

AN USHER. Silence in court.

THE K.C. If you believe these articles found on the prisoner to have belonged to John Quale, gentlemen, you are likely to have little hesitation in connecting that fact with his guilt.

OLD MRS. QUALE. Why aren't I to be heard?

THE K.C. My lord, this witness's anxiety is due to the fact that John Quale was her favourite among many grandchildren.

OLD MRS. QUALE. He were that, sir.

THE K.C. Perhaps, on second thoughts, the jury would be interested to hear her. Her own certainty may help them. Mrs. Martha Quale.

(OLD MRS. QUALE goes into the box and is sworn. She is infirm, slow in answer, a little slow in the wits.)

THE K.C. You are Martha Quale, John Quale's grandmother?

OLD MRS. QUALE. That's Martha Quale, sir.

THE K.C. You live with your son, Thomas Quale?

OLD MRS. QUALE. I pay four shillings a week, be it understood.

THE K.C. And you saw your grandson John leave Quale's Farm on Tuesday afternoon, August the twenty-ninth, at two o'clock?

OLD MRS. QUALE. Aye.

THE K.C. He was wearing a cap, a muffler, and he took his ball with him?

OLD MRS. QUALE. Those be they (*pointing to them*).

THE K.C. Look at them closely. (*They are handed to her, and she puts on her spectacles, and examines them.*) Are you sure?

OLD MRS. QUALE. If I was saying it to God Almighty, I am.

THE K.C. Thank you. (*He sits.*)

MR. BYNG (*rising*). My lord, gentlemen of the jury, the barren nature of the prosecution becomes more apparent at every turn. This reiterated certainty that dwindles away immediately it is questioned grows a little tiresome, if I may say so. Yes. My learned friend refers to what he is pleased to call my ingenuity. But he knows very well the weakness against which that ingenuity is directed. On the prisoner, he asserts, were found three things belonging to the murdered boy. Beyond that he has nothing to offer in support of his case, nothing. I allow, as I said before, gentlemen, that if beyond any shadow of doubt this point were proved, I should have some uneasiness as to your decision. But this point at least must be so proved beyond a shadow of doubt before there is even a case to go to you. Without that, which man among you dare take the responsibility of sending the prisoner to a felon's death? I venture to believe, not one. And has a single witness under cross-examination been able to stand by his oath that these things were little Johnny's? You have heard each of them, and each of them has had to admit that their ready certainty was no more than surmise at best. And now another is put up before you, with the same assurance, to tell you what has already been told, as I submit, to no purpose. Patience, gentlemen, is a virtue, but mine is at an end. Martha Quale, you are little Johnny's grandmother?

OLD MRS. QUALE. Little Johnny be dead, sir. There be the man that killed him.

MR. BYNG. Answer my questions, please. He was your grandson?

OLD MRS. QUALE. He were my grandson.

MR. BYNG. You swear that that cap was his?

OLD MRS. QUALE. I do.

MR. BYNG. My lord, gentlemen of the jury, I did not wish to weary you before with redundancy of example. But the prosecution persists in its own discrediting. (*He produces another cardboard box, and opens it.*) Here is a box of caps, also bought yesterday in Salisbury. The pattern has been a stock one for five years. It is identical with that of the cap in your hand, Mrs. Quale. Now, do you swear

that that cap could not have belonged to some other little boy?

OLD MRS. QUALE. It belonged to little Johnny. I am sure of that.

MR. BYNG. My good woman——

OLD MRS. QUALE. I'm not your good woman, and if I was a bad woman I wouldn't be yours.

MR. BYNG. Attend to my questions, please.

OLD MRS. QUALE. Then don't call me your good woman.

MR. BYNG. Do you swear that this muffler was little Johnny's?

OLD MRS. QUALE. I do.

MR. BYNG. Do you swear it could not have belonged to some other little boy?

OLD MRS. QUALE. I don't know that I——

MR. BYNG. Do you swear it?

OLD MRS. QUALE. I am sure it was my Johnny's.

MR. BYNG. Very well. You swear that it was his, and you will not swear that it was not someone else's. The jury are accustomed to that by now. Was this ball little Johnny's?

OLD MRS. QUALE. It was.

MR. BYNG. Very like these others, isn't it?

OLD MRS. QUALE. It may be.

MR. BYNG. His mother could not tell one from the other.

OLD MRS. QUALE. Maybe not.

MR. BYNG. But you can.

OLD MRS. QUALE. I can.

MR. BYNG. My lord, gentlemen of the jury, I submit that this is scandalous. These people one after another are trying to swear this man's life away, and not one of them can support their evidence by a single circumstance, or answer the clear reasons that I advance why that evidence is wholly unreliable. "I am sure," "I am sure," for the twentieth time you hear that from the box. Martha Quale, you are an old woman. How will you answer at the judgment that so nearly waits you, if you are asked why you were so ready on a mere supposition to destroy this man? You know this ball from another, you say. You must then have some means of knowing it. Why did you not tell your counsel what it was?

OLD MRS. QUALE. He didn't ask me. Isn't it enough to say I know what I'm sure of?

MR. BYNG. Again I tell you, no, it is not, and I venture to think that you will agree with me, gentlemen. Thank you, you can go. (*Old Mrs. Quale turns to go.*) Or, stay a moment. Let me make one last exposure of the shameless method upon which the case against the prisoner has been built. You, Martha Quale, have sought to add a touch of conviction to your evidence by saying that you can tell this ball from any other, though nobody else could. Will you kindly tell the jury how you can do this? Nothing could be of greater interest, eh, gentlemen?

OLD MRS. QUALE. I know that ball belonged to little Johnny, because I made it. And I wound it up on a little three-cornered piece of black leather cut out of the sole of an old shoe. And if you unwind that ball you will find the piece of leather in the middle.

THE JUDGE. Let me see the ball. (*It is handed to him.*)

MR. BYNG. My lord——

THE JUDGE. No, Mr. Byng, you must accept your own evidence. (*To the Clerk.*) Unwind the ball, please.

(The CLERK *takes the ball and unpicks an end of the wool, which he gives to the* SERGEANT. *As the* CLERK *unwinds the ball between his hands the* SERGEANT *winds it up into another. The court strains at attention. The prisoner, who has been utterly impassive throughout the trial, moves nervously in the dock. The* CLERK *at last comes to the end of his unwinding, and, holding up a three-cornered piece of black leather between his thumb and forefinger, exclaims.)*

THE CLERK. By God, he's hanged. (*There is silence for some moments.*)

THE JUDGE. Have you anything further to ask this witness, Mr. Byng?

MR. BYNG. I—er—I think not, my lord.

THE JUDGE. Very well. You may go, Mrs. Quale.

(OLD MRS. QUALE *leaves the box.*)

THE K.C. (*rising*). My lord, gentlemen of the jury, on my learned friend's own showing . . .

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Expressionism—Or What You Will

By Hermon Ould

In the Theatre, as in the other arts, one ism gives way to another; and the ism most in favour to-day seems to be Expressionism. Travelling in Germany a few months ago, I met the word everywhere—*Expressionismus*. I did not know what it meant; even the illuminating article by Mr. Huntly Carter in the last number of Theatre-Craft did not reveal its occult meaning to me. To my concrete mind, theories about art never do mean very much. If an ism cannot be examined in its results, without a knowledge of its theory, I have no particular use for it. I leave it for the minds of the æsthetic to play with and pass on to a consideration of something which touches me more nearly. When I was in Germany I saw several plays which were produced according to the Expressionist method. With one of them I propose to deal at some length—*Richard III.* at the State Theatre in Berlin—referring briefly to some of the others.

It would seem to be the aim of the Expressionists to discover the key-note of a play and make all other considerations subservient to it. In Tagore's *King of the Dark Chamber*, which I saw at the State Theatre in Frankfurt, unity of effect was maintained by framing all the action in variants of the characteristic Eastern arch; colour and the skilful manipulation of shadows provided the necessary contrasts and prevented monotony. In a production of *The Magic Flute* at the State Opera-house in the same town a similar device was adopted. In this the libretto demanded a suggestion of Egypt and the pyramid was chosen as the unifying symbol. All the scenes (with the exception of the penultimate, which achieved a ludicrous imitation of real flames!) exploited the pyramidal shape—either vertical or horizontal—and by this simple

means and the adroit use of colour provided an appropriate and often beautiful setting for the opera.

More subtle, but less consistent, was the production of Strindberg's *Rausch* at the Dresden State Theatre. A realistic setting of a bar scene had to compete with Expressionistic settings of the rest of the play—and it quite signally failed. The play opens, it may be recalled, in a churchyard. This was amply and beautifully suggested by two cypress trees and a large crucifix in silhouette against an evening sky. The last scene—which is a park—was presented in almost identical terms, a large gate, seemingly of iron, taking the place of the crucifix. The other two scenes are café-interiors, and it was in these that the new method found its most characteristic expression. The café, for the essential purposes of the play, was a table with its appropriate trappings, and an atmosphere. This is all that we were shown; and the lighting was so contrived that no sense of sparseness was felt. One was just not concerned with the rest of the stage. The table, with its gleaming cloth, glass and silver, and the two characters exposing their souls, were all the author wished us to see: they were all we saw. Adolf Linnebach, who contrived the setting, was also responsible for a remarkable production of Walter Hasenclever's play *Jenseits*, of which I hope to give illustrations in a future number of the ENGLISH REVIEW.

I now pass on to a consideration of *Richard III* at the State Theatre in Berlin—quite the most remarkable production I have ever seen at any theatre. Here the producer—Leopold Jessner—and the scene and costume designer—Emil Pirchan—set themselves the task of sacrificing all irrelevancies to the main idea, and they achieved their aim to such purpose, so far as I was concerned, that at the end of the performance I was tingling with excitement, and brought away with me an impression which is as vivid to-day as it was five months ago.

On pages 299 and 300 will be found illustrations of the main features of the setting. These give an idea of shapes and proportions. The colour of the "masonry" throughout was purplish-grey; of the sky, vermilion; the staircase, which extended from the front of the stage to the middle height, was bright scarlet, and the costumes of

Richard's army, as of Richard himself when he became King, were vermilion. Richmond's opposing army was costumed in white, and in the battle-scenes much was made of the alternating red and white.

The play is a play of one character, a character with little subtlety but tremendous driving force. To think of Shakespeare's Richard III is to picture a man of unremitting ambition, grotesquely lacking in moral scruples, a man only half human, with none of the softer qualities and little of the introspectiveness which belongs to many of Shakespeare's villains. The Berlin production forced home this conception from the beginning of the play until the end. A trumpet shrieked, and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, dressed in black, appeared in the inverted V-shaped opening of the dead-black curtains and stood on a slightly-raised platform—the embodiment of cunning and evil. From this position he delivered the opening speech of the play as if it were a prologue:

"Now is the winter of our discontent,"

the curtains dividing and revealing the full stage at the entrance of Clarence and Brackenbury.

In this production, as in the Dresden production, localised lighting was used throughout. I gathered that all the lights in the German theatres are worked on the "dimmer" principle—that is to say, a change of lighting is insinuated; it is not *turned on*. One becomes aware that it has changed because one's eyes have, willy nilly, been directed to another part of the stage. Much of the action in *Richard III* took place on the platform over the doorway shown in the illustration on page 299, the rest of the stage being in comparative darkness. No liberties were taken with the spoken text of the play, but many with the stage directions. There was no realistic scenery at all. The scarlet staircase, which served as the setting for many scenes, symbolised Richard's bloody path to the throne; the amount of fighting actually done on the stage was negligible, but one was present at many battles brought before one's eyes by shrill-voiced trumpets sounding one insistent note, and by the hypnotic tattooing of drums. The note of stridency was held all the time; one's mind and emotions were kept taut and responsive.

The scene—so easy to bungle—in which the ghosts of Richard's victims appear to him while he sleeps, was admirably managed. We saw the king stretched rigid on the scarlet staircase—nobody else. We were left to imagine the ghosts (which presumably had no objective existence), only hearing their voices and witnessing the effect which their words had upon the dreaming king, whose horror was horribly depicted by Mr. Fritz Kortner. As Shakespeare was careful to put into each ghost's mouth words which established his identity, there is even textual justification for this means of escape from the difficulty of presenting ghosts in the flesh.

A word about the costumes. The artist, untroubled by questions of archeology, was content to express the characters. Richard as King appeared in a flaming red gown whose amplitude served to emphasise his ungainly figure; on his head he wore a ludicrously inflated crown. The murderers were treated as "comic" characters; their movements were according to a grotesque convention, and their costumes—elongated striped hose and diminutive doublets—were designed to carry out the suggestion of twisted minds in twisted bodies. Richard's men were all in vermilion and Richmond's in white. At the conclusion of the play, the Whites having conquered the Reds, a great white curtain descends and closes in the stage, leaving Richmond, a solitary white figure, to deliver his last speech:

> "England hath long been mad and scarr'd herself;
> The brother blindly shed the brother's blood. . . ."

and so on to the end:

> "Now civil wounds are stopp'd, peace lives again:
> That she may live long here, God say amen!"

If this production was according to the theory of Expressionism, then Expressionism is amply justified in my eyes. It seemed to me to fulfil the chief function of art: the quickening of understanding, the heightening of consciousness.

The Contemporary Theatre

By Horace Shipp

The Love Thief, *Christopher Sly*, and the Mediæval Tradition.

It is probably something more than chance which has given us two Italian plays on mediæval themes running contemporaneously in London. Partly, one hopes, it is the instinct toward a theatre which accepts beauty for eye and ear as part of its business, and which leads author, producer, and all concerned with the arts of the stage out of our own time into countries and periods where life is imbued with the *décor* of old paintings and the charm of old romance. How far this element contributes towards the abiding fascination of Shakespeare's plays, or accounts for the artistic success of the Phœnix Society's revivals, remains an interesting problem for the theatre lover; that it constitutes the triumph of *The Beggar's Opera* and the appeal of the Russian Ballet admits of little doubt.

This understanding of the sensuous demands of the synthetic theatre, allied to the star parts for the two popular actor-managers concerned, should go far to ensure the commercial success of both these Italian plays. Militating against any real artistic success, however, is the fact that both are lacking as drama, and the opportunity for good decoration can never in itself constitute a permanent contribution to the theatre. The play has to be dramatic literature, acting itself from the printed page at need; translated into terms of the stage, it should give every opportunity for the other arts of the Theatre. But first of all it must be good as a play.

Both in the case of *The Love Thief* and of *Christopher Sly*, one realises at once the lack of this basic element: speeches which are an echo of poetic diction, characters motivated not by the inward necessity of such people as they are presumed to be, but by the artificial demands of

the plot, situations suited to the tenets of playwriting rather than to the facts of life or art. Then, too, in both plays we are faced with the problem of the mediæval tradition: we are asked to accept love as the thing of first importance in life and death, and in its pursuit murder, hate, torture, and every devilment of man is loosed, whilst on the other hand no conceit is too extravagant, no sacrifice too great in its service. There are such side issues as the unchallenged tyranny of force and wealth, the elaboration of jests to the point of fiendishness, and other assumptions a little hard to accept by intelligences steeped in doctrines of liberty, equality, and fraternity. We incline nowadays to a belief that love and sex are neither the simple nor the sole motives in our actions, and even while they dominate our literature we modify their working with the other motives which are inseparable from the complex human mind.

In *The Love Thief* there is none of this subtlety. It is all love, blood and wine, passions and revenge, braggadocio and elaborate plotting. If you are prepared to subject your mind to this Boccaccian atmosphere of unmixed motives and direct action, then *The Love Thief* is an elaborately constructed stage story; but even as a story it has obvious faults That twice in one play a cloak should be assumed to enwrap its owner when it actually didn't; that Lorenzo the Magnificent should release an enemy for no reason and on no evidence, when he has plotted his incarceration; that real madness should descend on the swashbuckling Neri at so convenient a moment—these things are too much to ask us. That people in a moonlit room can mistake the identity of intruders so conveniently as happens in this play taxes our credulity to the utmost. But then we have the mediæval tradition—"they say and tell and relate"—and the impossible becomes probable.

More important still is the question of the psychology of this type of play. I am not acquainted with *La Cena delle Beffe*, so do not know whether Sem Benelli or Mr. C. B. Fernald, who adapted the play, is guilty of the sin of omission which gives no reason why the cowardly poet of acts one, two and three should take unto himself such lions'-den-daring courage in act four. Neri was at least true throughout to his own melodramatic self; Ginevra has a character like a patchwork quilt, and since Cathleen

Nesbitt can convince you of the truth of every line she utters, it would be well that the lines should have some sort of consistency. Part of the trouble was that she and her poet were not one whit better than the villain whose downfall the play reveals. Had she been the woman who had lost her soul through Neri's devilment, and had she had a reasonable chance of finding it in Gianetto's arms, we should have watched the plot which led her to him with greater enthusiasm. One can only assume that all the people with any virtue in the Middle Ages died young, as well they might have done in a world peopled by such a set of rogues and bullies as appear in this play. There is a healthy tradition of melodrama which demands virtue somewhere, and, indeed, insists upon its ultimate triumph. *The Love Thief* has all the qualities of melodrama except that, and having no anchor in this sea of intrigue, our sympathies alternate, siding—as is the kindly nature of twentieth century humanity—with the bullied as plot and counterplot place the different individuals in that rôle.

If *The Love Thief* achieves success it will be because of its occasional strong situations, and the chance it offers for Norman McKinnel and Ernest Thesiger to act, and M. Komisarjevsky to decorate. The opportunities for colour were not lost, and alike in the brilliant and well-designed costumes, and in the stage sets (built in accordance with the technique which one still associates with the name of Granville Barker), there was a conscious sense of artistry.

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For mediævalism freed from its tradition one looks forward to the performance in November at "The Old Vic." of Halcott Glover's play, *Wat Tyler*. Using the Middle Ages for his setting, so as to obtain an objective understanding of human affairs, Halcott Glover can claim to be a realist without the drabness which we associate with the term, a Mediævalist without the untruth of Romanticism. The editors of THEATRE-CRAFT take a pardonable pride in their small share in introducing Halcott Glover to his public and wish Miss Baylis success in hers. The event is of special interest in that it will be the first time the Old Vic. has stepped outside the presentation of Opera and the Classics. A People's theatre, it is excellent that they should break new ground with a play upon such a theme.

THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

Economic Peace

By S. O.

IDEALISM is not generally associated with capitalism, indeed business men are quick to resent any imputation of spirituality encroaching upon the meaning of the term "practical politics"; which is to say that economics have no moral basis. And that this estimate has been so we can see around us to-day in the wreckage of war, the collapse of values, traditions, and beliefs, and the sheer waste of economic life as it faces us all as the result of the greatest tragedy in modern history. Our economic philosophy has failed, has led, as it was bound to lead, to mutual self-destruction, and in the process even Christianity has given up the ghost, as it were, of moral authority.

At such a crisis, a work which attempts to re-anchor economics to morals, to re-assess the social foundations of belief, and prescribe, in a word, a new "social contract" from the beginnings upwards, should receive widespread attention, and that the remarkable proclamation of the new Faith incorporated in M. Henri Lambert's works *Pax Economica* and *The New Social Contract* have as yet failed to arouse world interest is no doubt due to his position as the Master Glass Manufacturer of Belgium, in which capacity he is commonly supposed to be a "practical" man of business.

Yet as we stand to-day this wooden attitude is not enough, if only because, even practically, it is leading us nowhere. After five years of destruction, construction is essential. The question is how? Where to begin? On what foundations? It is here that M. Lambert shows the way. Formulating as his premiss of mankind that "man must co-operate or fight," he asks whether man, as individual, cannot win to an association of humanity based upon international peace, which clearly must be the pre-condition of all real progress, and doubtless as a dim

projection this was the actuating motive of Mr. Wilson's League of Nations.

The interest of this work lies in its deep sense of moral order, which M. Lambert defines as resting upon liberty, responsibility, and the solidarity of man. Liberty is, of course, a snare—there is no such thing; none the less, the idea lies at the roots of civilisation, and it is the idea always that matters. Liberty means free exchange, *i.e.*, right to work, to live—opportunity, and in individualism M. Lambert sees not isolation but association, co-operation, free and conscious solidarity. One might call it, every man for the whole and the whole for every man, and this means responsibility, moral and economic, in place of the old shibboleths which have brought us to this European cataclysm. His law therefore is individual responsibility. There, precisely where Christianity has failed by the very act of relieving the individual of moral responsibility, M. Lambert would begin. And the asseveration of an individual collectivism would postulate the creation of a new social and economic order founded upon the right of association both political and economic.

To-day, civilisation or the social order, being an abstract entity, impersonal as humanity itself, possesses no conscious will, conscience, or responsibility, and cannot by the nature of things progress. Its attributes only exist for and through individuals forming a collective being. There is no conscious organisation of progress, no means of obtaining it, no direction. Thus Society can only be, in existing conditions, democratic or individualist, always negative. There is no natural law, consequently no conscious aim. Instead of intelligent co-ordination and co-operation, competition reigns, leading to strife internal and external. The three great forces of life do not transfuse and so cannot transform; war, social, political, and national, follows automatically, and as the masses emerge from their feudal conditions, more and more able to think and so act, the whole economic fabric is threatened with collapse, for there is no harmony, no equation of labour, and no economic responsibility.

These three great forces M. Lambert pronounces to be Knowledge, Capital, and Labour, and it is on these three cardinal powers of man that the individualist democracy

can be refounded. Thus he goes to the root of the matter, diagnosing the evil in the body politic as the want of responsibility with its consequent confusions and antagonisms. There is no co-operative mind and the State Politics have become the vane of passions and personalities. It is impossible to get the right things done, or the useful things understood. Between the war of Capital and Labour, mind, which is the source of man's true wealth, is crushed out, leaving only friction supreme. In a word, man must co-operate or fight.

It is impossible in this brief space to do more than refer to the reforms advocated by M. Lambert, but roughly they fall under two main heads: electoral reform based upon Knowledge, Capital, and Labour—a scheme which would entirely eliminate Party strife and elections fought on ridiculous cries—and economic reform, the basis of which is the right of free membership, this latter not unlike the plan known as the capitalisation of wages put forward by Mr. Thoresby.

The political scheme seems astonishingly simple and would undoubtedly give Peoples a Parliament of genuine intelligence divided into three groups of 200 members each, drawn from Knowledge, Capital, and Labour, as a constant. Such a House would have no more use for Party values, and politics would automatically assume rational forms, for both the time-server and the hack-cry would cease from troubling. In short, Parliament so elected would be a truly intelligent assembly, scientifically constituted, the abuses of all present systems would vanish, and the greatest evil in all democracies, namely, the elimination of mind or knowledge, would be abolished, each of these three sections of the community being equally represented.

A similar reform would be introduced economically. Here, M. Lambert strikes at company law, which shuts out the worker from participation. He thinks that no solution of capital and labour can be found except by way of partnership and participation—in other words, that capital should be used for the collective good and not for individual profit, to the exclusion of the actual workers.

To-day, certainly this is no longer an academic problem—the industrial system is at stake. Our systems have been

found wanting. We are framing up for more strife, for still greater waste, for disaster, and the reason is the want of responsibility which proclaims the bankruptcy of mind. The idea that we can return to pre-war conditions may be ruled out. Man must have harmony or fight, and without peace and contentment there can be no progress. So much is obvious. The question for Europe in the next twenty years is to find an equation for labour, failing which societies and nations will resort to violence, as the only form of spirituality left to them.

M. Lambert suffers from no delusions, he is content to await the verdict of posterity, and it may be that in this pessimism he is wrong. Though change is slow and incredibly difficult, men do change their systems and behaviours, and progress can be registered. The main thing is to give economics a moral basis, which again merely means attitude. It may be dangerous, it may at the time seem impossible, the question will remain: Is it necessary? Can we continue along the existing lines of material competition? Can society attain to the co-operative state?

Looking at the wreckage of Europe, few men will deny the necessity of fundamental reforms, if civilisation is to survive, which assuredly as a congeries of warring economic antagonisms it can scarcely hope to. The Churches cannot help. There is no health in an organism designed on a basis of power internationally and economically, and there can be no peace. To win to a philosophy of peace the nations must attain to an economic organisation of exchange, but first they must secure peace within; democracy must be individualised, that is, responsible. This will eventually be the affair of education. In the meanwhile M. Lambert's projection in social science stands; it is a call to the new Faith. The destiny of men lies in the hands of man. It is the individual who creates. The State, society, our economic system, these are in the melting-pot because nowhere is there fusion, or harmony, or collective purpose. To give back faith to our civilisation, the need is of responsibility, in the individual and the State. What we want is a new social contract. We will either fight it out or think it out. We shall be foolish indeed if, blindly pursuing vain idols, we prefer the mud and criminality of strife.

How We Prepared the Zeebrugge Attack (iii)

By Eyewitness

On the afternoon of the 11th April, the longed-for order was received, and immediately all was orderly bustle and activity. Black smoke rolled from the funnels of the "Vindictive" and the blockships, the ferries drew alongside, were filled, and went to take up the tow; at four o'clock the order was given to proceed. The blow was launched.

As the vessels passed the "Hindustan," steaming in line ahead, out of the anchorage towards the south-west, they were greeted with round after round of ringing cheers which they duly returned. It was an inspiriting sight, and few of those that watched but wished themselves aboard those untidy and battered old vessels which were then rounding into the channels leading eastwards with all the possibilities of a glorious and successful achievement or a bloody and disastrous failure before them. They were summoned aft to the quarter-deck by the tolling of the ship's bell, where the Captain desired them to offer prayers for the success of the enterprise, a desire freely complied with.

Until about six in the evening, the expedition remained in sight steaming slowly towards the darkening horizon, then the haze swallowed them up.

After the departure, there was much to be done by the men remaining in the battleship; the living quarters of those that had gone had to be cleared up, their hammocks to be lashed and stowed away, and everything put ready for reissue in the event of their return. The effects of the crews of the blockships were hoisted in and stowed below in stacks according to the ships to which their owners belonged.

By the time all this was done, and the ship made tidy again, night had fallen, such a quiet night as had not been known in the old vessel for weeks and months; her decks

were strangely silent and empty, only a few men sat about in groups and spoke together in subdued tones. In the ward-room, the officers who remained behind sat in a little circle round the stove and discussed what might be happening out beyond, where, to the eastward, they had observed the usual reflection of the heavy-gun flashes on the distant clouds, and listened to the accompanying rumble.

Early next morning, it was known that the attack had been countermanded at the last minute, and the ships were on their way back to the Swin. It was a dead calm day, but a thick white mist lay over the sea, so that it was nearly noon before the leading blockships were sighted.

All possible men were sent from the "Hindustan" to help their small crews to pick up their mooring cables and re-coal their vessels. It was learned that the wind had changed right round, quite suddenly, when the ships were no more than ten miles from the Belgian coast, but it had been just possible to call off the attack in time, and it was believed that the enemy, who had been under steady bombardment the whole time, had failed to see anything unusual. There was, of course, considerable disappointment, but it couldn't be helped.

The weather was now watched with great anxiety, for time grew short, though, of course, the state of the wind in the Swin was no sure guide to its condition on the Belgian coast; it was, in fact, very uncertain and changeable in both places at the time.

The next attempt, which came off on the 13th, seemed foredoomed to failure, for the wind was freshening fast when the flotilla quitted the anchorage. By midnight, they were back again and struggling to pick up their moorings in half a gale. It was no easy work to secure the heavy vessels, by the fitful illumination of the battleship's searchlights, as they lurched and wallowed in the short and choppy swell of the shallow anchorage. It was done, and without accident.

Now there was no possibility of further attempts before the 22nd April, the problem of keeping the large number of men fit and healthy whilst cooped up in the crowded vessels had to be faced.

The "Vindictive" was, by far, in the worst condition; owing to their limited washing and bathing facilities, her

men had already become verminous. On the 16th, the battleship "Dominion," a sister ship to the "Hindustan," was hastily manned with a navigating crew, and sent down from Chatham to the Swin, as an additional floating barracks, and received the bulk of the "Vindictive's" people, whilst that vessel was thoroughly cleaned out.

The "Daffodil" had shown a disposition to lag, and her steaming power was found not to be up to the demands likely to be made on it; the engineer commander of the "Hindustan" diagnosed the trouble as an insufficiency of draught to the furnaces—really they were made so with a view to economy of fuel in her ordinary avocation of ferry—and caused holes to be drilled in the furnace doors, an efficient if temporary remedy, the credit for which—as so often happens—was ascribed to another.

Provisions, canteen stores, and officers' mess stocks were all failing, for the estimate of numbers to be provided for had been considerably exceeded in the final total, and the paymasters were landed to arrange for replenishment of stocks, which was done without attracting undue notice ashore.

The men were becoming impatient at being unable to inform their relatives that they were alive and well, so a supply of Army field postcards was procured, and served out to the delighted bluejackets, who fully enjoyed the opportunity of hoaxing their relatives into the idea that they were serving in France, and—as an officer was heard to remark—"it was a fine chance to work off arrears of letters without writing."

The resourceful Marine officers organised "sports" with trolley races and other novel competitions designed for the space limitations of the upper deck of a pre-Dreadnought battleship. There was a good deal of noise and fun, and, strange to say, nobody was hurt.

By the 19th, everything was again ready, and attempts could be continued till the end of the month, after which the shortening of the hours of darkness would render abandoning the enterprise inevitable.

The previous efforts had taken the edge of novelty off the adventure, so when the order to "stand by" again arrived, as it did on the afternoon of the 22nd April, men went about their duties only as though it was a routine

evolution, to be repeated on the morrow and again the day after. That evening, too, either by oversight or intention, no prayers speeded the departure of the ships; in fact, no one really thought it would come off, and in view of the dark and forbidding state of the weather, it really did seem less likely than before.

Morning came—St. George's Day—but no news of the flotilla returning. Interest quickened into excitement—had the attack come off on this day of all days? About eleven o'clock, a terse signal was received—"'Vindictive' was alongside the mole for about one hour from five minutes after midnight; blockships were sunk, but result still uncertain."

A loud and spontaneous cheer went up from the officers and men who had assembled round the Captain on the quarter-deck of the old "Hindustan" to hear the message read; the blow had been struck, and their work had not been in vain.

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The battered and bloody remnants of the flotilla did not return again to the Swin; they staggered into Dover to discharge their wounded, dead and living. The "Vindictive" was hastily prepared and, on 10th May, her glorious and shattered hull was sunk at Ostend to fill the gap left in the canal-blocking scheme by the failure of the first attempt on that port. The full value of these successful operations was never properly understood by the public, and would take a long essay to enumerate, but the fillip they caused to the public moral alone was well worth the not excessively heavy cost of execution.

The old battleship "Hindustan" returned to Chatham to pay off for the last time, the good old ship's time was finished, and she has now gone to the scrap-heap. The two little ferry-steamers have returned to their prosaic civilian service in the Mersey, but each proudly prefixes a title to its name "Royal Iris" and "Royal Daffodil," in memory of the "crowded hour" alongside the mole at Zeebrugge.

Europe's Golden Calf

By Austin Harrison

WERE poor Hamlet alive to-day to muse upon a platform, whether across the Hellespont or the murky Thames, his philosophy would surely not trail upon ghosts; his question would be Gold—to be or not to be; such in fascinating perplexity being the world's aftermath problem. Even the inveterate optimist finds a stray moment between the exhilarations of lawn tennis or the last race to study Europe's exchange declensions, and if, in his leisure hours, he is a merchant or seller of sorts, his interest is the more pertinent as the mysterious sickness spreads. For it is an astonishing mystery, a tremendous paradox. Gold cannot sell, "paper" undersells. America, in possession of three-fourths of all the coined gold in existence, actually absorbing the world's output of gold per month, has 6,000,000 unemployed and is actually down a bit on the exchange of Mexico: who seven years ago defaulted, yet to-day cashes the American dollar at a profit.

Here, even the official economists are pulled up, for not even gold is sufficient. It is the world's rub. The abstract theory of money is to-day fiercely related to its standard of value or measurement, *i.e.*, political economy has become the agony of civilisation. It hits us all all the time. As the mechanism sags, the nations depreciate. Victor and vanquished alike are rumbled, and, strange to relate, the wealthy are poor, the poor are wealthy, and all because of a deranged mechanism which slumps its own values.

Take a few curiosities of this world Bedlam. In America, which bristles with gold, unemployment is higher than in England; vast fortunes are being lost; she cannot sell, not because stricken Europe does not want to buy, but simply because this Europe, shorn of an exchange parity, cannot buy; ergo, the have-nots are better off than those who have. In Britain the picture is daily featured in the newspapers.

We who are infinitely better situated financially than any of the other belligerents have huge unemployment, high prices which refuse to yield in the retail or cash market, and, like America, instead of being the seller to impoverished Europe, the beneficent wholesale provider, we cannot sell, our goods accumulate eventually to be sold off at "break up" prices anywhere and anyhow to stave off the necessity of debentures or more bank overdrafts, which condition, now that the overdraft policy is "off," is rapidly driving production into Carey Street. Fascinating as a study, but not pleasant, hardly conducive to that jolly Christmas we all so resolutely anticipate.

Now take a few more startlers. A man can travel from London to Constantinople for the price, in Polish currency, that a visé to visit that country will cost him, reckoned on the exchange. Poland, which is a land of natural wealth and is the "pet" creation of militarist France, has an exchange of 16,000 marks to the £1, so that no Pole can buy a 1d. gas balloon even from Germany; such a balloon costing him about four marks in Berlin, or £3 6s. exchanged on London, which really is somewhat expensive. Russia is, of course, out of the orbit of all exchanges—we should not forget that. To pass to Germany, where the position is fantastic. There, two prices rule, the internal and external or so-called gold price, and the range is pretty extensive. What do we find? Precisely what we banked against, namely this: that Germany is doing a brisk trade, is industrially prosperous with few unemployed and a growing export potentiality, which, to the consternation of Allied producers, threatens to grow more real and valuable as the discrepancy in the value of her currency appreciates internally and depreciates externally, as is the case under the "jolly Roger" financial direction of Mr. Stinnes. And in her wake follow all the other midwife creations of Europe, from Roumania to Vienna, thereby still further closing the market to our goods, still further causing unemployment, still further jamming the world's mechanism, in the interest of its admittedly artificial standard of measurement.

And so the position of Europe is chaos. The vanquished Peoples can sell and produce by virtue of their

broken exchange mechanism, whereas the victor Peoples, proportionately to their deflationist policy and feverish desire to restore their parity of exchange, are less and less able to sell; are consequently steadily and progressively declining in wealth-making, if, as no doubt is true, the manipulators of wealth are growing rich automatically—the deflation of currency implying the inflation of debt, which latter is in exciting measure to their advantage.

We in Britain are particularly hard hit because our exchange is the best among the belligerents, and, as between the gold parity of America and the idiotic disparities of Europe, we find ourselves bound to buy our food at grave loss from America while unable to compete in Europe with either France or Belgium, who can, and do, undersell us on an exchange twice as bad as our own. To this complication we have our high prices and high wages, notably in coal, and so the elected Mayor and Councillors of Poplar go to gaol, and all over England tens of thousands of ex-soldiers wander about wondering why the blast furnaces do not restart if millions of fresh herrings can legitimately be thrown out for manure to keep up their "victory" price. And of course it is a bit staggering. For clearly the end is not yet. We are only nearing the end of the beginnings of the world's troubles, our real wealth having been shot away, what we have left being a constant of high prices and high wages disproportionate to Europe's purchasing power, which, to make things worse, is not only not stable but unexplainably volatile and fluctuating at the caprice of a two prices standard of fluctuations which can be used always against us, functioning on the very law which governs the modern theory of money which we, in inverse ratio, are struggling desperately to counterbalance.

What is this law? It is the quantity theory of money. By this is meant that prices level depends upon the quantity of money in circulation, such level varying with the proportion between the amount of money and the amount of commodities exchangeable for that money. In reality, this law is only a more scientific definition of the theory of supply and demand, in practice the law amounting to this: dear or scarcity of money brings down prices, cheap or abundance of money causes prices to rise. In normal times,

that is, when gold circulates [before the war the general average of the ratio of gold to paper among European nations was 70 per cent.], this theory no doubt was more or less correct, one of the favourite arguments of economists in explanation of the rising prices before 1914 being the extra abundance of gold, consequent upon the discoveries at Klondike. But to-day this theory is not scientifically exact because the mechanism indicating quantity currency values is no longer scientific. Moreover new forces have entered economics. Prices are no longer fixed by demand. The new thing is controlled scarcity, *i.e.*, finance; whole markets are bought and sold, not by producers, not even in the interests of producers, still less of consumers, but by financiers —in a word, credit issue to-day is in the hands of the manipulators of the mechanism, and prices take the chance of herrings which go to manure rather than into the stomachs of consumers (this by the way). Still, as a generalisation the law holds, for money is only a token or measurement, and so money and prices cannot both rise together in value —all values being relative. If prices rise, the value of money falls, and this must be so despite the fixation by law of the value of the gold sovereign, which is admitted to-day to be unscientific, the truth being that the specific value of gold to-day has unquestionably depreciated. Anyhow, there we are—on gold, and that is the explanation of the deflationist policy in Britain, the object being to bring down prices by raising the value of currency, that is, by restricting it.

This is the crux of the whole question. If the deflation of currency or appreciation of money value here is bringing us nearer to the gold standard (is it?) or nearer to the gold parity on the dollar, on the other hand the depreciation of money, automatically raising prices, is *excellent for debtors*, as we are to-day witnessing in the case of Europe, particularly Germany, all belligerents being in debt to Britain, who is the grand creditor of Europe to friend and ex-foe alike. Now when the quantity theory of money was first formulated, merchants and so-called practical business men refused to listen to it. To-day they are obsessed with it, and so characteristically once more even in their extremity they refuse to listen. But to understand the world's position

so much of economic theory must be grasped, for it is the simple explanation of our unemployment, our trade slump, our decline, and *vice versa* of Germany's ascension industrially, if again, financially, Germany would seem to be rushing into bankruptcy. Germany is doing inversely what happens in India consequent upon the periodic falls in the export value of silver. A premium is placed upon the importer, a bonus is given to the exporter. As Europe's supreme debtor, Germany thus can only sell. Incidentally she wipes out her home war debt by volumes of cheap money. Externally she captures trade because she can produce much cheaper and externally sell much cheaper; indeed she can control this position indefinitely according to the quantity theory of money, as it is open to her to control the exchange value of her own currency against any other nation's currency by operating, through currency issues, on her own internal price level. It is this that is baffling wooden theorists. For according to theory, as Germany sells, that is, increases her wealth, her exchange or measurement of gold value ought to appreciate, but it depreciates; the more she sells the worse externally the mark becomes. It does so partly because, playing on the mechanism of the gold theory, she can peg her own internal level of prices through the expansion or restriction of monetary issues, but chiefly because of reparations; moreover, so long as she is willing to risk insolvency by playing that game so long shall we suffer, unless we discover fresh markets in the East or, by way of international conference and agreement, we move towards world financial adjustment.

The question therefore is: How long can this fluxion of credit last without producing a crash which is likely to involve the greater part of Europe? Theorists fix it at next year, but this is by no means certain, for the simple reason that the quantity theory of money is only scientific provided that gold is in circulation whereby the mechanism can duly function as the policeman of credit, as before war. And this is not so. Moreover, the leading economists are seriously questioning the exactness of the theory in post-war conditions, recognising that at best it is the statement of a tendency incapable of quantitative measurement. Otherwise we too are bankrupt—on gold. What we have learnt

from the war is that "money" means credit and that such credit has soared far away beyond any gold anchorage, which fact in itself must reflect upon any attempt to theorise so long, at any rate, as we live in the glasshouse of paper credit, ourselves unable to return to a gold credit basis, not to speak of Europe, whose only use of gold to-day is cold storage. It is far more probable that we have come to a point of departure in exchange mechanism; that we are about to move from token or gold money to paper money as the mechanism of exchange, as the stepping-stone towards the creation of a world currency with a world stability of value, a true stable staple; which possibly may begin among the Anglo-Saxon Peoples. After all, the main point about gold is surety against excessive money issue. A gold exchange means fluctuations. To-day, when only the Americas have gold, the exchanges obviously must go on flying up and shooting down at the caprice of any speculator, Government, buying or selling tendency, for if gold is the argument, so its mechanism must dance attendance. The only real question is the result of it all. Does it mean wholesale European bankruptcy, or will America provide the mineral to restart the gold mechanism? Tacked on to that problem is the curious reflection that Europe, by starting her own paper credit standard, could drive out gold on Gresham's law, which really seems a law; could impoverish America, who keeps Europe's gold in the banks, where it is no use to her—no man in America questioning the value of the paper dollar—but of great disuse to Europe, whose exchanges fluctuate on internal prices to the serious detriment of all nations which have a decent exchange and do retain some standard of stability, on an expectant gold basis.

Now testing the quantity theory we find peculiar anomalies. If good money brings down prices, why are prices here so high? We have about £130,000,000, gold, in the banks; our paper shows no specific depreciation, and beyond a little tampering with nickel in the silver the £1 note is as good value as before the war; nor have we any excessive issue of paper currency. In fact, the ratio of gold and bank notes to currency issue was 15.16 per cent. on September 14. But prices remain high, relatively higher than

in Germany, and so they are in America. The assumption that money value is the control of prices value cannot be scientific. Money is, or should be, merely a standard of value; as such it cannot scientifically control commodity value or wealth, of which it should be the register, nor would it except by reason of a mechanism which in reality only works when it is in order, which to-day it is not. Again, take France. Her exchange is 52, say. She has (Sept. 15) in gold and gold balances over £200,000,000; the proportion between bullion and note circulation is 15.62 per cent. Yet her exchange is twice as bad as ours, though she has almost twice the amount of gold. Prices are lower in France relatively (I don't say in Paris) than here. To attribute prices level to money value to-day is to put the cart before the horse, for the world's difficulty is not cash or the retail market, it is credit—credit which is money, which has to be turned into money; and with that problem is the question of its anchorage, how to discover a measurement capable of defining and regulating its issue, if not its very meaning, seeing that the quantity theory of gold cannot possibly be extended to credit as it is, that is, as a mechanism for its restriction.

This is the issue, and it is in this connection that Germany's inflationist policy concerns us, for our unemployment is not due so much to deflation—our floating debt has increased this year—it is really the result of loss of foreign markets as the consequence of the mad exchanges; it therefore touches us in the quick. For what is absolutely incontrovertible about this inconvertible paper business is that unless we can and do sell abroad, deflation may bring us technically nearer to the dollar exchange parity, but in the process it will cause terrible unemployment and paralysis of trade, which in our peculiar position of the best belligerent exchange and the worst European seller may land us into industrial difficulties and social disturbances of infinitely greater moment to the State than the bankers' delight in increasing the value of the National Debt—on gold. This is our specific question. *Devaluation* is recognised as the only way to return to any effective gold standard, in which connection we must not forget that it is open to all nations unwilling to deflate or return to a standard no longer

applicable to the larger meaning of credit (which, so to speak, is the fourth dimension in the science of economic values to-day) to stabilise their exchanges by internal currency manipulation, which theoretically is quite legitimate and need imply no recognition of the gold standard whatever, provided that it worked. This aspect of the question applies in particular to Germany who, as before said, can work her exchange up or down according to convenience or foreign selling requirements; nor so long as Germans accept the mark internally is there any reason why Germany should deflate or return to scarce money. Indeed all Europe no longer on gold might stabilise an exchange on the basis of devaluation at some parity with the dollar and so effectively and continuously undersell us, and as the problem is international because the whole mechanism of credit is interdependent, this can no longer be treated as an "enemy" question, for the more it is so treated the worse it must become, which no doubt is the reason why the French have secretly made an arrangement to get something for nothing out of Germany before the effect of the Reparations policy brings about its inevitable Nemesis.

Consider Germany's position. She has (Sept. 7) about £50,000,000 gold in the banks, against which she has some 160,000,000,000 marks representing bills, notes, etc. Now without a doubt she could handle this formidable debt but for the Reparations, but saddled with Reparations, this paper debt must grow as her payments are made, as in fact has been the case in the last few months over the paltry £100,000,000 payment. It has caused the mark to slump from 200 to 400 and in attendance has slumped all other European exchanges. She is selling out her gold. In time her remaining £50,000,000 gold will be sold out, when there will, financially, be nothing left but paper, and this presumably is the reason why financiers anticipate the crash in about June, 1922. This may enable France to occupy the Rhine, but *cui bono?* The demand for marks as the result of exports is entirely outbalanced by the selling of marks to pay reparations, hence the decline in the exchange, which will go on as payments become due until the bottom falls out. As Mr. Maynard Keynes has so lucidly explained: To pay her £200,000,000 (gold) Germany has to find 50 milliards

of marks, which means that next year Germany has to treble her revenue while halving her expenditure, and six months later double again, until she has no expenditure and a revenue equal to the £300,000,000 (gold) annual tribute laid upon her. In other words, she has to double her exports without increasing her imports—which we know to be impossible. Mr. Keynes now opines that Germany must default some time in 1922. Were the Reparations policy designed to make Germany bankrupt it might be regarded as eminently effective, but if, and when, she goes bankrupt the question of credit will assume immediate practical bearing, and the major part of Europe will be involved. But I am not thinking of the fantastic, for afterwards we shall be no penny the better off, unless we reinflate or so deflate as to knock down prices and wages to below pre-war levels. If we mean to bankrupt Germany, why not ask for that £50,000,000 (gold) and be done with her? It would be the most sensible solution, and we might persuade France to allow us to have £5,000,000 of it, as a dole towards Mesopotamia. After all, the French franc as the result of the "assignats" was quoted at 7,200 to the £, and that settled it—a quite respectable figure compared with the Polish exchange to-day; but then France did not have reparations to pay, and once she had buried the "assignats" she shot up with marvellous persistence, as doubtless Germany would to-day, given a breathing-space and relieved of the economic disabilities which in reality have harmed Britain as much they have harmed her.

For all value is relative, even exports, even gold. It is absurd that England with her premier credit, currency exchange, coal and industrial power, should decline, while Germany even as she sinks into technical bankruptcy—it is only a technicality, utterly unscientific—progresses, and the reason is the immutable law of value which is balance. Always there is an opposite. Thus, man, woman; night, day; exports, imports, or credit, which again depends for value upon security. Thus a nation with a huge export balance would not be well off if the credit which must pay the difference between exports and imports is not good, as examples of which we find America, who with a thundering balance of exports yet suffers because of bad European

credits, and on the other side Germany, who prospers because the gold parity nations and those approximating to such a parity cannot come down to the low purchasing power of Europe and Germany's low selling power. And so America is Europeanly worse off than Germany, and were it not that she is entirely self-sufficient would indeed be in a parlous state. We stand halfway between these two dislocations.

There are contributing causes which aggravate the evil. Our victorious psychology is against us. In Germany, when the workmen complain, the factory master says: "Gentlemen, you lost the war. Be thankful that you are alive"; and the argument tells; but in the victor countries it is the men who call the tune: "We won the war," they say, "we demand heroes' wages," and so the ruthless logic of economics plays advantageously there, disadvantageously here, for the victors think in heroics, which in peace has a bad exchange. The whole problem is exchange; how to restart the flow of goods, how to pay for them, how to liquidate the mechanism of the exchanges, how to reattach credit? To iterate work, thrift, production will carry us little further, for it is not commodities that have gone "dotty" to-day, it is not real exchange values, it is not economics that are wrong, it is our mechanism which without gold cannot function, which no longer has a credit anchorage, which in fact cannot be restored unless and until gold is recirculated, for gold is the dynamics of monometallism and can alone control it.

Now of course if nothing is done, and Germany automatically defaults and repudiates next year, carrying with her Austria, Poland, Roumania, and the Balkans in parity with Bolshevist Russia, we shall see the results—when they happen; but in that eventuality, apart from the physical disturbances inevitable, we must remember that three-fourths of Europe will then be bankrupt, thus constituting a pretty strong condominium of non-credit nations who can collectively quite easily start a European paper currency based on a new standard aimed at the gold credit peoples, who will not be in a position, industrially, to retaliate. The next ten years may then witness a kind of bimetallist warfare of Europe on paper *versus* the rest, always to the sell-

ing advantage of the former, seeing that the gold sovereign cannot depreciate—which incidentally is nonsense. Again, there is an outway. We may find European nations insisting upon being paid in their respective currencies, a scheme which might speedily rectify the exchanges apart from any gold standard. A third is a mundic currency. Best of all would be a genuine international expert conference—not of hate but of true gold—to devise ways and means to re-establish credit, stabilise purchasing power, or find a world stable paper currency which, not being a commodity, would not inevitably in times of chaos fluctuate against the true exchange values of commodities and by its very intrinsic variability disturb all exchange proportions. To Britain there is no more vital a matter. America can afford a European smash, and so can France,* for both those countries are self-feeding. We are not by 50 per cent.

After the Napoleonic wars we started out as a monometallist and captured the world, but to-day that monopolist position has passed to America, who seems afraid to use it, though the whole science of the gold basis is to use the gold. And America cannot stop the gold absorption which leaves Europe as a dead-weight loss to lie in America as a dead-weight or sleeping unit. What of? Surely not of measurement of values, which should be its function? Still less of convertibility, which is the basic law of the gold standard. It is an amusing revelation of theory tested by fact. All deplore the falling purchasing power of Europe, yet we all look on meekly while Europe's decreditisation proceeds westwards, and the policeman of excessive paper issues quits Europe for solitary internment.

On the whole, the exchanges of Europe are less wild than they might be expected to be, if, as the economists of gold profess or pontificate, *convertibility* is the law, and month by month, all European paper becomes less convertible; clearly, the exchange fluctuations are the normal result of a Europe shorn of gold, for if the exchanges did not fluctuate madly it would merely signify that bankers no longer believed in their own mechanism, which, by the way,

* The small unemployment in France is due to her colossal Army and vast Bureaucracy, of missions, etc., extended all through Europe—on "paper."

is extraordinarily profitable to them. What we have then is a Europe growing weaker on its exchanges, but stronger in real wealth, and this strange position of the mechanism first, productivity second, must tend to develop as the gold parities become a minus and commodity values a plus. When therefore able merchants (we have to thank Maynard Keynes for restoring to us that admirable eighteenth century word) and professional gold apologists tell us that production is the only way out, that and cheap labour (they usually omit to quote Adam Smith on dear stock), they are not logical, now recognising, as they do, (1) the inconvertibility of Europe's paper, (2) the failure of gold quantitatively as the attachment or stay of modern credit, (3) the absurdity of calling for production when by insisting upon their own theory, which actually consists in making the mechanism more important than the values of which the mechanism is but a standard, by the very operations of finance the producers are less and less able to sell, and so correct the broken mechanism which slumps them.

This is even demonstrable. A year ago the producers proclaimed super-production as our specific panacea. What happened? The goods became a surfeit. It is not deflation which has slumped our merchants—it is the mechanism operating on Europe's purchasing power, and similarly in India. We could not export to the Colonies because Europe could not buy Australian wool, for example. Now the goods were there. The sheep gave up their wool, as usual; it was the "woolly" economics of the F.B.I. which caused stock to slump and so the banks to get alarmed, due very largely to this fact; that in 1920 stock was bought at boom prices which fell on the world's mechanism. Had the F.B.I. looked first to the mechanism, they could have sold all that stock this year advantageously, for all Europe is in want of our goods and in reality is far more able to buy in 1921 than in 1920. And so now we find the F.B.I. calling out for more home credit. Again, the diagnosis is false. Inflation here will not help. What we are suffering from is world *under-consumption*. It is not our bankers' fault. It is America's drainage of Europe's gold; above all, it is the Treaty which, as I showed two years ago, must lead to decreditisation or falling

exchanges, economics having been placed no longer under the benevolent alchemy of gold, but under the *political* disintegrator of hate which has no common denominator at all. More production will only aggravate the symptoms, the expression of which here is unemployment. Inevitably so. The suggested remedy that wages must fall to pre-war levels is only possible if prices follow, but they cannot, and this fact is emphasised over coal which we cannot produce and sell in competition with the political price of Reparation coal or even American coal. We come back to the Treaty which subordinated economics to politics. As things are, finance is fighting against production, for the exchange of credit, in the existing conditions of chaos, is no longer related to or controlled by the exchange of commodities; that is the true diagnosis of the problem, as it affects us. The mechanism controls, but the control is decontrolled by political considerations, and the key to our prosperity lies in the economic deflation of a Treaty which politically set up in Europe the quantity theory of inflation; there is no abundance. Every nation has been taught to shut out imports, leaving the margin of their exports to be paid in credit which by the nature of things must be paper, *i.e.*, there is no credit. Hence its depreciation. In countries which can by this vicious circle export, like Germany, the thing works, but in countries like Britain, even Belgium, where prices and wages have not fallen *pari passu* with currency value, unemployment is pronounced, and only the unknown quantity of new markets, or new inventions, can, until Europe does crash, lead us upwards again to anything like the augmentation of profit now indispensable to us, as a debtor to the gold countries.

And so two schools are developing here; the bankers who call for deflation or dear money, the producers who want cheap credit. I submit that both are leaving out of account the foundation of credit, which is confidence, which to-day is international. To Britain, it is the whole that matters. Otherwise it would be better to control our export trade and aim solely at home consumption, but this in great part we cannot do. We at any rate must export, or decline. If Europe cannot buy from us, we must either regulate and stabilise its purchasing power or discover new absorbing

markets, failing which we shall grow poorer, precisely as Rome did; this is also America's difficulty. Now if America were to restore to Europe some £400,000,000 (gold) a beginning could be made, and we should sell again. Once start the gold circulating and recovery would be still possible. The alternative would seem European bankruptcy which, if there is a science of economic values, is palpably ridiculous. At the same time it is hardly fair to expect America to invest gold in Europe, without economic adjustments providing surety. And that is the crux of the matter. As European prices and wages rise as the result of cheaper money, the surety depreciates and must, as gold leaves Europe, continue to depreciate. The fascinating problem remains. Will Europe start a paper standard *versus* America? And if so, which world will be slumped?

The whole trouble arises from the gentlemen at Paris, who imagined that credit was perpendicular. They reckoned that if Europe was divided into perpendicular isolations the control would benefit by the depressions, but credit, like the golf swing, is horizontal. You may lurch and sway at golf—see the punch sway of Ray—but the up and down movement is fatal, as it is with credit. Down and up go the exchanges, but the horizontal flow of trade is clogged, and the consequent depressions tend to glut and stoppage in the accumulators, as even France is finding, herself not benefiting from the great industrial wealth given to her. When "victory" prices and wages have to be paid, the constipation of supplies means that exports have to be paid by credit, which is the one thing that cannot be supplied, hence the failure of the Ter Meulen credit scheme. It only means more inconvertible paper. Precisely the same will happen over German Reparation Bonds. Who will buy them? On what security? We cannot seriously ask America to invest in bonds used primarily to arm and abet militarism for one section while stopping the trade of the rest of Europe, for the sad truth is that Germany can only pay in commodities which again must be controlled, or, industrially, we shall go out of business. Economic Napoleonism cannot pay, that is all. It means that America absorbs our gold, which, if she puts it into circulation, would drive up her prices beyond all export-selling

power, or that America must export on credit: ditto Britain; sooner or later, ditto France. It is there that the £6,000,000,000 Reparation Bonds will go smash. America will refuse them. What then? Why, then of course we shall be intelligent and go back to our horizontal swing. To-day, we are "topping" the ball all the time, and the bunkers of Europe catch us all the way. The remedy is the "pro.'s" advice. Remove the political control. Flush the accumulators. Start out afresh. Never mind the indicator. Sell the goods, then there will be work, and with work will come the desire to work.

At Washington bankers will have something to say, for as German bonds must be useless unless America is prepared to buy them, America can talk hard business to the tune of £6,000,000,000 credit, the truth being that by agreeing to bonds France put herself in the hands of the money-lender who can only be America; America's question will be surety. Here we may come to world points.

In addition there is Europe's debt which Europe cannot pay. Thus in possession of the gold, the power to wipe off debts, and the only real credit available, America has a triple advantage far outweighing passion, sentiment, or even fear, and at least the sheer stupidity of the position must, it would seem, become luminously and so constructively apparent; nor, this time, are we at all likely to talk mob politics with one eye on an election. Our strength will depend upon Ireland. If the Premier can settle Ireland, he will be able to go to the United States much as Mr. Wilson came to Europe; Mr. Lloyd George is not the man to miss so golden an opportunity. To be sure, De Valera holds the staying pin. If for a boutade of mystic coruscation he cannot bring himself, or induce Sinn Fein, to come down to Mother Earth, why the conference may not be, in which case we shall go to America without an argument and we are likely to come away without that financial adjustment which can give employment to our workers. We may expect then an election—another Khaki affair on the cry of England *versus* Ireland or Catholic and Protestant. But that will not help us in America, or in the Empire. Thus the world's position may be expressed in a pun. For De Valera's "sovereign"

state, the gold sovereign of the world is at stake. Minus Ireland we cannot talk the gold standard in America, plus Ireland we can come back on the gold standard. It is finance *versus* sentiment, hard cash as against soft money. Three years ago I pointed out that Ireland was the key of Lombard Street, the sesame of empire, the test of our civilisation. Ireland—by God!—is worth a mass, as Paris was in the eyes of the astute Henry IV. I can hardly believe that the Premier will allow this conference to fail because of a formula—words without thoughts never to heaven go, and if only Valera will understand that, he too can issue from the conference as a Shakespearian. We stand before a tremendous crisis. Irish sentiment is a disease. Her psychology has become morbid, her absonic index is depressed, her reflexes are not automatic. This, the fruit of age-long agony, should lead us, as the wise physician, to prescriptions of pity. Words for or against Ireland no longer matter. What we have to do is to exorcise the snake of dissension which holds our truth and sincerity in pawn. It can be done. The very word, sovereignty, is to-day an anomaly. Ask Charlie's "kid" what he thinks, say, of Mexican sovereignty! All this is really politics. But finance is not politics. If we want to re-Cromwellise Ireland, then we ought to have reinsured ourselves first, financially. To-day, the drum in Ireland means emptiness at home, for Ireland is our equation with the New World, and in the super-sense of world politics is the road to the creation of a real Association of Nations. Perhaps Valera knows this. Yet this is also our opportunity. Never mind what Ulster thinks about the Pope. Ireland lives to-day in the New World. It is Ireland in exile that is fighting. The sins of our fathers come back. So it is with Ireland. Pitt is dead, but Greater Ireland returns in the New Worlds. Our task is to reconcile this overseas Ireland with our overseas responsibility, and to secure this end we should by hook or crook, by stave or crucifix, by Hell or Heaven, get Sinn Fein into conference.

The thing to do is to get busy. What Europe needs is an economic general staff and a world credit conference with powers to act. Europe is suffering more from the peace than from war; she will continue to suffer until a

remedy is found. It could be found. If we and America were to start a new credit system, we should control the world, as we did originally over gold. True, financiers do not favour a measurement which would stabilise prices, but though the kings of modern civilisation, they are themselves irretrievably caught on their own mechanism. Finally, it is production that matters. A world currency would be a world solution and all our troubles would melt into air, for then commodity values would not be controlled by a variable intrinsic commodity. And this should be the service of a true Association of Nations come together not to fight but to co-operate, not to dispossess but to integrate. Now the whole duty of gold is balance or restriction. But this task it can no longer perform. A new measurement of credit is essential to us and to Europe, or assuredly in the confusion of politics, internal and external, *versus* economics, which latter cannot dodge its intrinsic difficulties of convertibility, our civilisation will crash, and for the spirit of the golden calf we shall have sacrificed both substance and humanity.

Austin Dobson and Lovat Fraser

By Thomas Moult

THE passing of Austin Dobson at the age of eighty-one could hardly have been unexpected. It is with no consciousness of disloyalty to a genuine poet and lovable personality that some of us declare our second thought at the announcement in the news-sheets as that of realisation over again and with added force how deplorable was the death of Claud Lovat Fraser, earlier by a couple of months. The association of the two men in our mind is very natural. They were both occupied during their lifetime in allowing their artistic imagination to play upon the London of the ugliest century in English history, and transforming it; the older and more sophisticated man into a sort of provincial Paris, the younger into everything that might be expected from a healthy-minded, ingenious disciple of Mr. Gordon Craig. Austin Dobson believed fervently in the eighteenth century: his approach to it was, in some of his ballads and essays, as near as an artist can get who has cheerfully cut himself adrift from his own times. "Of my year's reading I remember Madame Sévigné's letters and one or two novels by Scott," he replied to an editor who, in the year of the publication of Morley's *Life of Gladstone* and Henry James's *The Ambassadors*, had asked him for information. And in *A Bookman's Budget* he has quoted an extract from an anonymous Jeremiah which obviously expressed his own feelings towards contemporary artistic movements:—

"And this is where we are now (1916) as far as Art is concerned, in gloomy darkness. The mad, maniacal dancing of the post-impressionist, the amazing cubist, and incomprehensible futurist, adding to the sadness of the darkness. And this is the end of pre-Raffaelism (*sic*)! In the dreadful post-impressionist exhibition there was a large canvas representing four hideous misshapen creatures dancing uncouthly over a mound. And I interpret the dance as one of post-impressionism, cubism, futurism, and senseless, unfeeling ignorant brutality over the grave of murdered Art,

with all its beauty, grace, love, tenderness, imagination, poetry and friendliness—all swept away in Art-Attila destruction. But Art never dies—she will arise in all her noble beauty and charm, and some future S—— will look back and recall the sad, strange time."

Lovat Fraser was a devotee of the eighteenth century with a difference. While Dobson seemed content, especially in his later days, to be its mouthpiece, its interpreter, just as though the period had a purpose, that of enshrining itself in the hearts of later periods through a modern artist, Fraser was simply the modern artist with a purpose; and his purpose chanced to be the artistic glorification of a period other than his own. No one could claim Fraser as of those estimable folk (O disgruntled but eternal type!) who see beauty and merit in any age so long as it is not the age in which they themselves are doomed to pass their earthly existence. Mr. Holbrook Jackson, in a quietly appreciative memoir in the August *Bookman*, has told us how it came about that in the age of the Regent and Beau Brummell and Beau Nash an atmosphere was created for Fraser's genius. He delighted in everything that smacked of pirates and highway ruffians, he became ecstatic at the recollection of old inns and broadsheets, milkmaids and "bucks." In most of his work he had drifted well away from his master, that greater theatre-genius; how close to him at the beginning he was we may see by comparing the charming examples of his bookplates in the current number of the *Bookplate Magazine* with those of Mr. Craig reproduced in an earlier issue. His peculiar gift always demanded expression in miniature form, and slowly it became clear to him that the eighteenth century, with the wide opportunities it gave for his quaint conceits and fancies, was exactly the kind of background he needed for his decorative tendencies.

The Beggar's Opera, as played at Hammersmith, is not a picture of Mr. Gay's time so much as a fantasy proceeding from the mind of an artist who lived two hundred years later: this is a truth which we now realise with infinite sadness, because we could well have done with many another feast of the kind, many another manifestation of a great-hearted boy's holiday. That he was a great-hearted boy to the end his old friends, Mr. Haldane Macfall, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Michael Sadleir have already borne testimony. "Lovat was so glad just to be alive," Mr. Macfall

has written. "He was an affectionate, generous fellow and liked everything and everybody: and if there were ever anything in his life which did not make for happiness it was the act of anyone that seemed unfriendly—he would fret about it and wonder if he had himself been to blame." That is a beautiful thing to have written about one—it could be said truthfully about so few of us—and it is only natural that his friends should be many, exulting in his growing success as most folk only exult at the embarrassments of a rival.

The personal memories of which those friends now find themselves the grateful holders are consequently to be laid, not in the favoured lavender of his favoured era, but in warm and timeless sunlight. They may reach back to the day when he gave up studying for the law and entered the studio of Mr. Walter Sickert, or they may be all of recent years, as are the present writer's—from the day when, in Mr. Michael Sadleir's home, Fraser set to work planning out the artistic side of a young magazine about which he was as whole-minded as though it had been his own invention: by way of subsequent mornings on which arrived his letters, packed with dainty script and Indian ink-drawings in miniature for magazine covers, and samples of the coloured papers which he believed should replace the plain white of conventional pages: down to the day in a publisher's office just before he left for the country holiday on which he died, when in the intervals of designing a cover for a volume of poems (again someone else's than his!) he gave imitations of Charlie Chaplin, and expressed great anxiety for the health of a mutual friend, just as though there were no need for concern about his own. Small wonder that fresh breezes and generous colour should now, for the theatre-goers of two countries, be ruffling through the stale periwigs and costumes and transfiguring the pock-marked faces of that dead English century: a century which, producing only one great writer, assumes new interest for us to-day, not for its own sake, but because it gave scope for Fraser's delicious gift.

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Books

BIOGRAPHY.

THE TRAGEDY OF LORD KITCHENER. By VISCOUNT ESHER. John Murray. 10s. 6d.

THIS personal record, in some ways disappointing, probably sums up the value of Lord Kitchener, who, although not a great man, incarnated in all essentials the greatness of his race and class. A man who never read, who had grown into middle-age out of his country, who was neither a born commander nor a student of war, Kitchener was great by virtue of character, of personality, and thus apparelled he undoubtedly was Britain's man of the hour in 1914. Alone among English soldiers, he realised the immensity of the struggle, and he set to work to raise the new armies as perhaps he only could have done. That is his signal service. Where he failed was in the political arena, and in the unscientific military mind which failed to see the necessity of a General Staff years before the war,

which boggled at conscription, which was not true to type, as the really great are. Thus he sanctioned the Gallipoli gamble though thoroughly disapproving it. He did not understand the new nature of war, and so the need of shells, high explosives, etc.; his was the Eastern mind. There is no doubt but that physically and scientifically he was no longer able to cope with the complexity and immensity of the war after 1915, and when he returned from the Dardanelles he found himself being ousted and his usefulness declining. His work was done. His name was all to us and to France prior to the Somme. As he himself said about Democracy, it demands "eye-wash." That is his tragedy, and he was conscious of it. As an estimate this work is coldly just, and for that reason it has an historical value.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

SIGNS AND WONDERS. By J. D. BERESFORD. The Golden Cockerel Press. 5*s*. net.

IN the seventeen short papers which make up this little volume Mr. Beresford discusses in a level and cultivated voice some of the fringes of our apprehensions about which people often whisper or gesticulate—momentary glimpses of cosmic catastrophes; little intrusions from or into the hidden, outside, dimly apprehended limbos; admirably written little sketches to which fantasy gives zest and piquancy, by contrast with the substantial handsomeness of the setting; little thrillers on the higher plane, a new form with a distinctive appeal to the gentle reader.

FICTION.

BREAKING COVERT. By S. P. B. MAIS. Grant Richards. 8*s*. 6*d*. net.

SEVERAL runs with the beagles, a coursing match and foxhunting, mounted and afoot, are sufficient justification for Mr. Mais's sporting title; whilst, for those who care for none of these things, there is the story of a wooing larded with copious quotations from the poets, lots of Lincolnshire topography, an abundance of eccentric characters—with backchat complete—a hunt ball, and a general atmosphere of youth and the delights of life. This is an intentionally happy book in which three authentic persons set out caravanning to seek their fortune and light upon the hospitality of a neglected profiteer who needs companionship and social polish. Whilst enjoying this hospitality and administering those little tips which make all the difference, the doings of the tale happen in rapid succession and three really nice people meet their fates. The runs are the best things in the book, for they are written by an enthusiast—the rest is passably amusing.

BOOKS

ONE WOMAN. By ALFRED OLLIVANT. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

MR. OLLIVANT warns the unwary that this book is the second part of *A Romance of Sussex,* but those who have been unfortunate enough to miss *Two Men* will find *One Woman* a complete and satisfying whole. Ruth Caspar is full woman, an audacious mother-lover who attracts men by her vital splendour and enjoys handling danger and drilling her husband into manhood. How she does all this in a charmingly drawn Sussex setting, with its clash of interesting and lively personalities—the little gods of her gentry folk, the doctor, the colonel, the parson, and so on—is a true and moving story. But outside and beyond the little stage is the great, impending, disregarded danger—the threat in the air like thunder—of the years just before the war—that half-forgotten menace with all its strange political and social reactions, of which Mr. Ollivant makes brilliant use in the development of his theme, not overweighting his romance with an *ex post facto* scroll, but recapturing the doubts and complacencies of a vanished England for an undertone to his delightful variations on human nature. A highly vitalised and individual book.

THE GRAVE IMPERTINENCE. By CHARLES MARRIOTT. Hutchinson and Co. 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

COWLEY'S *Business, the Grave Impertinence,* gives the title and provides the motive in this admirably fine spun story. Largely, it is the spiritual incongruity of God and Mammon which is demonstrated, but the development is so full of delicate implication and so illuminated by whimsical accuracy of type and temper, that one lives through all the unexciting pages of the story with a sense of actual participation in the resolution of half-apprehended crisis. To those who find in the workings of the human mind the supreme interest, this new story of Mr. Marriott's will give grave and sustained delight, for it is most delicately done, with the actualities intimately understood, fresh and timely, as a solid and reassuring backcloth for the finer drama of taste and implication suggested with clean and intimate touch. Roughly the story is of a successful business man's scheme to reorganise the life of a settled village community, with his good will tainted by the advertising qualities of his benevolent desires; his gradual realisation of the grave impertinence, and his decision to abide by the better work. A story of the era of reconstruction, keenly aware of its movements and potentialities, it is before all a delicate bit of artistic expression. A very notable book.

POLITICAL ECONOMY.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF WAR. By A. C. PIGOU, M.A. Macmillan. 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

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